"THE CENTURIONS VS THE HYDRA": FRENCH COUNTERINSURGENCY IN THE PENINSULAR WAR (1808-1812)

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The comparison of Marshal Soult and Marshal Suchet's case-studies demonstrated that French officers solved their operational dilemma in different manners. But the analysis also outlined a common denominator to their practices. Leverage of religion, build up of native security forces, and development of an influence-driven campaign constituted the major tenets of this nascent doctrine of counterinsurgency.

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The opinions and conclusions expressed herein are those of the student author and do not necessarily represent the views of the U.S. Army Command and General Staff College or any other governmental agency. (References to this study should include the foregoing statement.)

ABSTRACT

–THE CENTURIONS VS THE HYDRA": FRENCH COUNTERINSURGENCY IN THE PENINSULAR WAR (1808-1812), by Major Philippe Gennequin, 168 pages.

Considered the first documented commitment of a Western-style army facing a nation-wide insurgency, the Peninsular War deserves a critical examination of French pacification methods. In spite of a severe defeat, the *Grande Armee* achieved success while conducting counterinsurgency operations in Aragon and Andalusia. Based on Spanish, French and British primary sources, this thesis intended to examine if these results were connected to the personality of great commanders, flexible small unit leaders, or external factors. The underlying rationale was also to produce a broader picture on French counterinsurgency while bridging the imperial experience with the colonial period.

The comparison of Marshal Soult and Marshal Suchet's case-studies demonstrated that French officers solved their operational dilemma in different manners. But the analysis also outlined a common denominator to their practices. Leverage of religion, build up of native security forces, and development of an influence-driven campaign constituted the major tenets of this nascent doctrine of counterinsurgency.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

When I decided to write this thesis, I was coming back from Afghanistan where I had been an actor and an observer of counterinsurgency warfare. Prior to this deployment, I extensively read major French theorists on irregular warfare, like Galula or Trinquier. At the same time, I was in contact with the French officer who preceded me at the US Army Command and General Staff College. He was working on Marshal Lyautey‘s pacification doctrine to extract useful hindsights for our current engagements. Intrigued by his conclusions and driven by my personal interest for history, I decided to modestly examine the roots of the French school of counterinsurgency, through the seminal episode of the Peninsular War. Many of the ideas expressed in this thesis have been shaped from discussions with my American counterparts and the members of my committee. But I am alone responsible for the information, interpretations, and conclusions as well as any mistakes that may appear.

I am especially indebted to my committee, Dr. Mark T. Gerges, Dr. John M. Curatola, and Mr. William G. Snider, as well as Dr. Nick Murray, Dr. Thomas M. Huber and Dr. Prisco R. Hernández who offered useful comments, and shared with me their passion for History. During my research and writing, many of my colleagues also gave generously their time and support. In particular, I am grateful to Major Alejandro Serrano and Major Jose de La Pina, my Spanish counterparts, who helped me to translate primary sources, and gave me a different perspective. I am also grateful to Mrs. Venita Krueger who shaped my final manuscript and to Mr. Michael Browne who collected outstanding sources. My wife Fatou, and my daughter Sarah deserve a special mention for enduring my endless discussions, and for supporting me throughout the process. God bless them!

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

I seized by the hair the chance fortune gave me to regenerate Spain.
— Napoléon Bonaparte, *Mémorial de Sainte-Hélène*

Background

In the 21st Century, the rise of unconventional warfare and even Hybrid wars challenges contemporary military thinking.[1] Furthermore, the renewed commitment of the French armed forces in Afghanistan, and the rationalization of their disposition paralleled with a renaissance of the *contre rébellion* theory.[2] In that framework, history is likely to provide significant examples of successful strategies, implemented by Western style armies, placed under comparable constraints. Moreover, the French counterinsurgency school was born from a multi layer integration of previous experiences, most obviously the strata of David Galula and Roger Trinquier, during the post-World War II era.[3] But were their principles really new? At that time, the ideology

[1]Frank G. Hoffman, *Conflict in the 21st Century: the Rise of Hybrid Wars* (Arlington, VA: Potomac Institute for Policy Studies, 2007).

[2]*The French Doctrine for Counterinsurgency at the Tactical Level* (Paris, Centre de publication du CDEF, April 2010) specifies that to avoid confusion and possible misunderstanding with allies, the word *Contre rébellion* is translated as counterinsurgency. Although the American and British meaning of this term better corresponds to the French notion of stabilization.

[3]David Galula (1919 to 1967) was a French officer and a scholar who theorized counterinsurgency warfare. He worked in China in 1945 as an assistant to the military attaché in Beijing during the rise of the Communist Party. In 1948, he witnessed the Greek civil war as part of the United Nations Special Committee on the Balkans (UNSCOB). From 1956 to 1958, he put in practice his observations while pacifying a sector of Kabylie at the head of his company. Galula resigned in 1962 to study in the USA, where he obtained a position of research associate at Harvard University. He

of modern insurgencies gave a specific political stain, and the track of the *pacification* doctrine was also traced by Joseph Galliéni and Hubert Lyautey, during the colonial period.[4] In fact, the most significant episode of counterinsurgency operations, conducted by the French, found its roots with the campaign of Spain (1808 to 1814), during the bygone Napoleonic era.

At first glance, the "Iberian Leech"[5] or the *Spanish Ulcer*[6] may be considered as a counter-example to study the way to conduct counterinsurgency. Indeed, the Peninsular War constituted a severe defeat for the *Grande Armée*, and a tragic episode for the Spanish nation. However, it is also considered the first major asymmetric engagement of

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collected his experiences in two books, *Pacification in Algeria* and *Counterinsurgency Warfare: Theory and Practice*. Roger Trinquier (1908 to 1986) was a French officer who fought in Indochina and Algeria. Capitalizing on his own experience as a practitioner, Trinquier proved also a major theorist of counterinsurgency warfare. His book*, Modern Warfare: A French View of Counterinsurgency,* was particularly studied by the US Army prior to the engagement in South Vietnam.

[4]Joseph Galliéni (1849 to 1916) was a French officer who took part in various explorations and military expeditions in the Colonies. He was governor of French Sudan, fought in Indochina before testing the oil-spot strategy in Madagascar, the expansion of pacified areas followed by social and economic development. He served as Ministry of War in 1915 and was posthumously made Marshal of France in 1921. *The Pacification in Madagascar* recollected his experiences. Hubert Lyautey (1854-1934) was a French officer, first *Résident-General* in Morocco and Marshal of France. He served under Galliéni in Madagascar and also adopted his methods. His writings deeply influenced David Galula's reflexion on counterinsurgency. For further information, see Douglas Porch's consistent article on the French "colonial school" of warfare. In Peter Paret, *Makers of Modern Strategy, from Machiavelli to the Nuclear Age* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1986), 376-407.

[5]Mark A. Reeves, "The Iberian Leech: Napoleon's Counterinsurgency Operations in the Peninsula 1807-1810" (Master Thesis, U.S. Army Command and General Staff College, Fort Leavenworth, KS, June 2004).

[6]David Gates, *The Spanish Ulcer, a History of the Peninsula War* (Cambridge, UK: Da Capo Press, 1986).

a modern army, facing the primary nation-wide ―guerrilla.‖ ―The road to failure is the road to fame.‖[7] Precisely because it was a disaster this theater of operations deeply impressed a generation of French officers.[8] The lessons learned during the Napoleonic wars, not mentioning the Tyrolese or the Calabrian ―small wars‖ would be applied in Northern Africa by those junior officers, who suffered in the Spanish *sierra*. Indeed, they observed and implemented tactics under the command of some of Napoleon‘s generals who conducted successful counter-guerrilla operations. Both Marshall Louis Gabriel Suchet and Marshall Nicolas Jean-de-Dieu Soult, in different manners, managed to pacify Aragon and Andalusia. That is why these events deserve a critical examination of the French counterinsurgency methods, even if the main belligerents‘ perspectives blur the distinction between fiction and reality.

Definitions and Research Questions

Before proceeding further, it is necessary to clarify terms, which will be extensively mentioned in the following pages. First, Field Manual 3-24.2 defines counterinsurgency as ―those military, paramilitary, economic, psychological and civil actions taken by a government to defeat an insurgency.‖[9] If this definition is anachronistic in the Napoleonic context, it perfectly matches with its contemporary spirit and will take on this meaning.

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[7]Basil Liddell Hart H, *Scipio Africanus* (Cambridge, UK: Da Capo Press, 1926).

[8]Future Marshall Thomas Bugeaud is considered one of the most glorious members of this generation.

[9]Headquarters, Department of the Army, Field Manual (FM) 3-24.2, *Tactics in Counterinsurgency* (Washington, DC: Headquarters, Department of the Army, April 2009), 3-1.

Guerrilla traced its origin in the Spanish word *guerilla*, which meant "little war," referring to a "party of light troops for reconnaissance and opening the first skirmishes."[10] In this thesis, the term is much broader and encompasses the multitude of self constituted bands, which harassed the *Grande Armée*, and their tactics, known as guerrilla warfare. The definition of counter-guerrilla is much more problematic. In the absence of doctrine, it was a multifaceted concept for the French commanders, whose comprehension would diverge, according to their experience and personality. As a result, counter-guerrilla will be used to define military operations conducted to attack the insurgency directly. And counterinsurgency will be understood as the combination of all instruments of war to break the link between the insurgency and the population. In a nutshell, the two concepts can be differentiated through their application: counter-guerrilla aims at the enemy, whereas counterinsurgency "targets" the population. This taxonomy will be particularly useful to avoid misunderstandings when different case studies will be interpreted.

As a result, this thesis intends to answer the primary research question: "what kind of factors and influences may explain effective French counterinsurgency operations during the Peninsular War, and how were they implemented? Was success connected to the personality of great commanders, to flexible small-units leaders or external factors? The underlying rationale for this study is to produce a broader picture on French counterinsurgency, while bridging the Napoleonic best practices with the colonial experience. For that purpose, the secondary research question will address the following question: "Did an embryonic doctrine of counterinsurgency emerge from this campaign?"

[10]Ernest Dupuy, "The Nature of Guerilla Warfare," *Pacific Affair* 12, no. 2 (June 1939): 139.

Significance

In summer 1808, the sudden and nation-wide upheaval of the Spanish population constituted a strategic surprise for the French. Moreover, the symbolic defeat of Baylen proved to Europe that the *Grande Armée* was not invincible.[11] The lines of communication were unsecured, French garrisons were harassed and supply convoys destroyed. The Imperial Army had lost the initiative.

By February 1811, the submission of most Spanish provinces was obtained. The British army was contained inside Portuguese borders. Joseph-Napoléon Bonaparte[12] made a triumphant entrance in Seville. In 1810, Marshall Soult even mentioned in a correspondence addressed to Marshall Louis-Alexandre Berthier, Napoleon's chief of staff, on 3 February 1810: "The war may be considered almost over."[13]

> With the exception of Galicia and Cadiz . . . the French in principle controlled Spain. Most of the heavy fighting was now confined to the Spanish periphery. . . . The population's general belief was that the normality of the French occupation had become a fact of life. . . . Nonetheless, relief that war was more or less at an end seemed the dominant note.[14]

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[11]The battle of Baylen (19 July 1808) was a crucial Spanish victory against the French army which fueled the national resistance. The book of Charles Clerc, *La Capitulation de Baylen, causes et conséquences* [The capitulation of Baylen, causes and outcomes] (Paris, France: Thorin Editions, 1903) provides an excellent discussion on the aftermaths of the battle.

[12]Joseph-Napoléon Bonaparte was the elder brother of Napoleon I, and was king of Spain from 1808 to 1813.

[13]Soult to Berthier, 3 February 1810, letter published in Pierre Lanfrey, *Histoire de Napoléon 1^er^* [Napoleon I's History] (Paris, France: Charpentier Editeur, 1860), 360.

[14]Ronald Fraser, *Napoleon's Cursed War* (New York, NY: Verso books, 2008), 364-365.

In two years, the Spanish furnace was reduced to scattered flames with the exception of Cadiz citadel.[15] With historical hindsight, the final result reminds us that the situation was just a lull. The ebb and flow of the guerrilla and the limits of the Imperial replacement system, responding to the constant wars conducted in Europe, would have tragic consequences. Nevertheless, such results obtained from scratch in the face of a quintessential insurgency deserve a close examination. In fact, this thesis will not debate if the *Grande Armée* was defeated in a conventional way, thanks to Wellington's ability. Neither will it assert that the final thrust was given by the guerrilla. It is likely that the combination of both courses of action decided the fate of French forces.

However, the 1810-1811 situation of calmness is the direct outcome of localized and cumulative French counterinsurgency successes, which will be debated. Independently from the context, lessons learned from this conflict may generate a reflection on the conduct of operations in modern counterinsurgency conflicts. Integration of the religious factor, use of indigenous forces, small unit tactics or civil-military action constituted a part of the challenges the *Grande Armée* met two hundred years ago.

Assumptions

Considering the lack of French strategic unity of purpose in Spain, and regarding the nature of counterinsurgency, three major assumptions support my argumentation. Not only did they help me to narrow my research, but they also guided my reflection in

[15]Besieged from 1810 to 1812, the city of Cadiz never fell to the French. It harbored the retreating national government which wrote the Spanish constitution of 1812. This text marked the initiation of liberalism in Spain but was not recognized by Ferdinand VII after his restoration to the throne in 1814.

developing indicators of success. The first assumption is that the insurgent body count is not an efficient indicator to assess the results of counter-guerrilla operations. The more the *Grande Armée* killed insurgents, the less successful it was to enlarge its footprint. Moreover, the number of French casualties recorded by the regimental adjutants usually did not reflect the virulence of local guerrillas. Most of the time, it was the symptom of a lack of qualified personnel and medical facilities, while malnutrition, squalor and epidemic worsened the rate of mortality in the battalions. Most of the killed in action were wounded soldiers, who died from disease during their evacuation from Spain to France. In 1808, the Bayonne and Toulouse hospitals, in Southern France, were overwhelmed by the influx of injured troops, and became the place where people were left to die.[16] Consequently, figures relating to French or Spanish casualties will not have any pivotal role in this thesis. The second assumption pertains to the significance of the tactical and the operational levels, as sound levels of war to study this conflict. In fact, the paucity of Spanish related materials in the Emperor's personal correspondence outlines the lack of strategic directive for the attention of Joseph or his marshals.[17] The lack of unity of effort, embodied by the nonexistent coordination between the provinces, proved that the operational level was only partially relevant to the strategic effort.

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[16]Jean De Kerckhove, *Histoire des maladies observées à la Grande Armée française pendant les campagnes de Russie de 1812 et d'Allemagne de 1813* [History of observed diseases in the French *Grande Armée* during the 1812 campaign of Russia and the 1813 campaign of Germany] (Anvers, Pays-bas: Imprimeries T.-J. Janssens, 1836).

[17]Joseph Bonaparte (1768 to 1844) was Napoleon's elder brother. He was made king of Naples and Sicily, then king of Spain, under the name of *Jose Primero* [Joseph The First]. He was reluctant to take the Spanish throne but reigned during the Peninsular War. His partisans, called *josephinos*, never controlled more than Madrid and the center of Spain because his authority was challenged by the French marshals.

Furthermore, warfare in the 19th Century was characterized by a ―compression" of the levels of war. Thus, a Napoleonic Lieutenant General was responsible for ―local issues," and submitted to the Emperor's decision for broader purposes. As a result, tactical case-studies will have right of way. The third assumption is related to the methodology used to demonstrate the birth of French counterinsurgency tenets in Spain. This study considers that the best practices, emerging from the comparison of both case-studies, constitute a common denominator which can be assimilated to a nascent doctrine.

Books Review and Assessment

The bibliography review outlines that the analysis of the Peninsular War was deeply influenced by the three belligerents' national agendas. That is to say those primary and secondary sources, from both sides, are likely to be biased and need to be scrutinized with caution. First, the British historiography usually overlooks or ignores the significance of the guerrilla to focus on conventional warfare. In particular, the military Anglo-Saxon studies were influenced by the history of the ―Great Man": either, they focus their effort on Wellington's art of war, or they depict Napoleon's failure to express a consistent strategy. In fact, the weight of Wellington's 13 volume correspondence collection[18] and Napier's monumental *History of the War in the Peninsula*[19] are

[18]Arthur Wellesley, *The Despatches of Field Marshall the Duke of Wellington during His various campaigns in India, Denmark, Portugal, Spain, the Low Countries, and France from 1799 to 1818* (London: John Murray, 1838).

[19]William Napier (1782 to 1853) was a British officer who commanded the 50th Queen's Own Regiment during the Peninsular War. Wounded during the battle of Corunna, he was made prisoner by the French, held near the headquarters of Marshal Soult, and then returned to the British army. Later, he became general in the army of India and made the conquest of the Sindh province, in Pakistan.

significant to understand this partisan situation. On the contrary, the "two Charles" scholar studies emerge from the British bibliography, providing the readers with useful and objective hindsight on the Spanish war. Sir Charles Oman remains the ultimate reference, regarding the political military environment.[20] Indeed, the author brilliantly analyzed the cause and effect chain, which determined the historical events. More recently, his seminal studies established Charles Esdaile as the world's foremost historian of the Iberian Peninsula. In particular, his unorthodox portrait of the guerrilla, and the vivid accounts of contemporary witnesses[21] definitely place him at the summit of the Peninsula war Pantheon.

Second, the Spanish "hagiography" tends to mythicize the black legend of the occupation, by exalting the resistance of the "patriots." Moreover, the Iberian corpus was affected by the deconstructionist school of history, whose gloomy depiction may be compared to Francisco Goya's drawings.[22] In fact, the Peninsular War was portrayed as a liberation war, and designed to nourish and foster patriotism during the nation-building process of Spain. The popular imagination was primarily forged in the late 1800s by Benito Galdos' romantic series, *Episodios nacionales*, which exalted the Peninsular War. Furthermore, this historical episode was instrumental for Franco to support his political agenda, in the aftermath of the Civil War (1936 to 1939). Eventually, the Caudillo's

[20]Charles Oman, *A History of the Peninsula War* (Oxford, UK: Claredon, 1930).

[21]Charles Esdaile, *Peninsular Eyewitnesses, the Experience of War in Spain and Portugal, 1808-1813* (Barnsley, UK: Pen and Sword Books, 2009).

[22]Francisco de Goya realized, from 1810 to 1815, a series of 82 drawings called Disasters of War and published in 1863. In this work, the artist describes the acts of torture and violence perpetrated by the Imperial Army over the Spanish population.

death in 1975 initiated a fruitful period for research as censorship disappeared. Today, Ortunio Martínez,[23] Enrique Ruiz Martínez[24] or Francisco Díaz Torrejón[25] are respected for their outstanding sociological description of the guerrilla, and represent a generation of searchers, more dedicated to "passionless" studies.

Finally, disinterest characterized the French studies: on the one hand, the Peninsular War was perceived, by contemporaries, as a secondary theater in comparison with the Russian campaign. On the other hand, it was a confused war, made up of a myriad of violent episodes, whose description was considered fastidious, and likely to obscure the Napoleonic legend. As mentioned by Jean Aymes, the Imperial propaganda was very active and efficient to subjugate the French and Josephan Spanish press.[26] Even memoirs, published during the *Restauration* are likely to serve political interests or justify questionable acts.[27] In fact, most of the French primary sources, studied in this thesis, are

[23]Ortuño M. Martínez, *Xavier Mina, guerrillero, liberal, insurgente: Ensayo biobibliográfico* [Xavier Mina, partisan, liberal supporter and insurgent: Biographical Essay] (Pamplona, Spain: Universidad de Navarra, 2000).

[24]Enrique Ruiz Martínez, "La guerrilla y la Guerra de la Independencia" [War of independence and Guerrilla Warfare], *Revista de Cultura Militar* [Military Review] no. 7 (1995): 69-81.

[25]Francisco Luis Díaz Torrejón, *Guerrilla, contra guerrilla y delincuencia en la Andalucia napoleonica, 1810-1812* [Guerrilla warfare, Counter-Guerrilla Warfare and Criminal Activities in the Napoleonic Andalusia, 1810-1812] (Madrid, Spain: Fundación para el Desarrollo de los Pueblos, 2004).

[26]Jean-René Aymes, La guerre d'Espagne dans la presse impériale (1808-1814) [The Spanish War in the Imperial Press], *Annales historiques de la Révolution française* [Historical Annals of the French Revolution] no. 336 (2004): 1-14.

[27]The *Restauration* (1815 to 1830), or restoration, is the name given to the period following the fall of the First French Empire under Napoleon. The new Bourbon regime was a constitutional monarchy characterized by conservatism and the re-establishment of

based on general officers‘ writings, who would serve the French monarchy after 1815. With the exception of Marshall Suchet, whose results and reputation are crosschecked by the Spanish and British bibliography, other narratives must be put in perspective, and are mostly valuable to describe specific or local issues. For example, Major General Pierre Thouvenot applied counterinsurgency in the vicinity of Vitoria, and was the first to experiment the use of indigenous forces. General Maximilien Foy served under Soult in Portugal, but wrote a ―Napier-like" history of the Peninsular War through a French scope. Reports or correspondence of junior officers become the most valuable piece of studies, because counter-guerrilla operations were decentralized and implemented at small unit level. Moreover, junior officers‘ testimonies usually do not bear any political ambitions. Thomas Bugeaud‘s career is an example of this generation and encapsulates the French junior-officers‘ experience in Spain: From 1st Lieutenant to Major, he served during the Peninsular War, with the 116th *Régiment de ligne*, and would be a future Marshall in North Africa. More recently, a new interest on counterinsurgency and the enduring efforts of the *Fondation Napoléon* cascaded with a growing number of studies, dedicated to this forgotten war. Jean Tullard[28] and Thierry Lentz[29] epitomize this ―old blood" generation, whose uncontested Napoleonic knowledge generated shrewd analyses of the Spanish campaign.

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the Roman Catholic Church. Failing to reform and adapt to liberal ideas, the *Restauration* ended with the 1830 revolution.

[28]Jean Tulard, *Napoléon* (Paris, France: Editions Fayard, 1987).

[29]Thierry Lentz, *Le Grand Consulat 1799-1804* [The great Consulate 1799-1804] (Paris, France: Editions Fayard, 1999).

In brief, the British approach is centered on the flamboyant personality of Wellington and emphasizes the Red Coats‘ achievements in Spain. The Spanish guerrilla-centric bibliography serves a nationalistic purpose and is based on partly destroyed or scattered sources. Finally, the French historiography is subject to manipulation by pro and anti Napoleon movements, which shook the post- Empire society and even later.

Limitations

The Peninsular war was a matrix of modern threats: terrorist attacks, partisan war, small wars, and even compound war. As these terms do not constitute the major point, this thesis will focus on Spanish guerrillas in the Iberian Peninsula with the exception of its coastlines and Portugal. It will deal mainly with tactical or operational issues and the timeline will be delineated between 1808 and 1812. The case studies will relate to specific provinces but comparisons may be developed with contiguous areas. Limited higher level analysis will be used to put some facts in perspective. Eventually, the reports of battles and events will not be listed in a chronological way but will be occasionally developed in foot notes.

Delimitations

To the exception of Jean-Marc Lafon‘s study which relies on unpublished documents from Andalusian public and private collections, the limited number of Spanish primary sources narrowed the scope of this thesis regarding Southern Spain. Most of the regional archives were accidentally burnt during the Civil War (1936 to 1939), or purposely destroyed to mitigate the significance of the pro-French collaboration, especially in Andalusia.

Among the French primary sources, one is also surprised to find information so scarce on counter-guerrilla operations. The majority of contemporary officers' recollections deal with regular warfare. And if they describe irregular warfare, it is usually to outline the spiral of violence and cases of atrocities from both sides. In the end, this study did not discover any tactical analysis of counterinsurgency written by French officers. This lack of examination is surprising in comparison with the abundant French literature related to the *Guerres de Vendée* [Wars in *Vendée*].[30]

Conclusion

The bewildering richness of the events, the multiple national agendas and the diverging personal interests of the main key players draw a foggy landscape, where the reader may easily get lost. To overcome these issues, the following thesis will depict, in Chapter 2, the sociological and political environment, prevailing in Spain before the war. It will also highlight the deep causes of the insurgency, and dissect the guerrilla to understand its ideological and operational components. Based on this general analysis, chapter 3 and chapter 4 will zoom in to scrutinize how Suchet and Soult tackled the counterinsurgency challenges imposed by Aragon and Andalusia. Founded on the following results, chapter 5 will compare their policies and assess their results through specific measures of success. It will also summarize the best practices to evaluate emerging patterns and present the major tenets of a nascent counterinsurgency doctrine. In conclusion, chapter 6 will describe the limits of counterinsurgency warfare in Spain. It

[30]In 1793, the French Republic deployed 50,000 troops in *Vendée*, a French region, to conduct counter-guerrilla operations against a royalist and popular upheaval. The insurgency was finally curbed after a violent scorched earth policy.

will finally demonstrate how the Spanish experience was capitalized by the *Africain*s during the colonial period, focusing on Bugeaud's career.[31]

[31]The *Africains* [The Africans] is a nickname given to the generation of French officers who conquered Algeria, Tunisia, some parts of Morocco, Senegal and Madagascar during the colonial period.

CHAPTER 2

THE FIRST CLOUDS OF A GROWING STORM

> The force which I have at my disposal is evidently insufficient, since, independently of the enemy's corps which I oppose, it is necessary to guard against the numerous swarms of brigands, and of strong organized bands which infest the country, and who by their activity, and particularly by the favor of the inhabitants, escape all pursuit, and reappear behind you a quarter of an hour after you have passed. This is the system of dodging which seems to have been adopted by the insurgents. Permit me, prince, frankly to declare my opinion. The war with Spain is no longer an ordinary affair; there are doubtless no reverses or disastrous checks to be feared, but this obstinate nation undermines the army by petty oppositions. It is in vain that on one side are crushed the heads of the hydra; they reappear on the other; and without a revolution in the minds of the people, you will not be able for long to reduce this vast peninsula to submission; it will absorb the population and the wealth of France.
>
> — Marshal Kellermann to Marshal Berthier,
> *The History of the Consulate and the Empire of France Under Napoleon*

By describing the guerrilla's prerequisites, political, economic and social factors created, in Spain, a favorable environment for a powerful insurgency. Of course, dramatic events like the "Bayonne ambush" or *Dos de Mayo* affected the Iberian calculus, but it was the accumulated past that really narrowed the central power's options, influenced the population and made the insurgency a movement of such magnitude.[32] In 1808, the prewar Spanish history may be compared to the chronicle of a foreseen disaster. All the indicators for a generalized uprising were visible. Popular discontent undermined a powerless monarchy. The naval blockade asphyxiated an economy plagued by inflation

[32]With the Bayonne agreement, Ferdinand VII abdicated in favor of his father, Charles IV, who yielded his rights to Napoleon. The French Emperor organized this meeting to isolate the Spanish royal family and obtain her submission. This event remained in the French History under the name of *Embuscade de Bayonne* [Bayonne ambush]. On 2 May 1808 [*Dos de Mayo*], the Madrid populace rebelled against the occupation of the capital city by the French army, provoking a fierce repression and triggering the Peninsular war.

and unemployment. Eventually, French imperialism and the Enlightenment were powerful drivers to destabilize the peninsular quasi-feudal equilibrium.[33]

An Exhausted Monarchy

From a political point of view, Spain‘s freedom of action was reduced. If she embraced her naval aspirations to consolidate her American colonial legacy, she would have to struggle with the powerful British navy. On the contrary, if she decided to accept her continental destiny, she would have to fight against the French *Grande Armée*. In fact, her rivalries with Great-Britain and France drew a strategic dilemma. Since 3 November 1733, the *Pacte de famille* between the French and the Spanish branch of the Bourbons resolved this dilemma, while founding a robust dynastic alliance.[34] But the status quo was untenable because of contradictory political and economic interests. The Spanish monarchy, like its Portuguese sister, needed to maintain and reinforce their fragile relations with Central and South-America.

Highly dependent on Great Britain, which could easily threaten its transatlantic trade and overseas possessions, Spain was between two fires. In 1790, an international crisis between London and Madrid about sovereignty and rights of navigation in the

[33]The Enlightenment is a French school of philosophy which considered critical thinking, individual freedom and democracy as central values for a society. Tracing its origins to *Descartes' Discourse on the Method*, published in 1637, scholars usually use the French Revolution of 1789 as a convenient point in time to date this movement.

[34]Three family alliances between the *Bourbon* kings of France and Spain (or *Pacte de famille*) were respectively signed in 1733 (treaty of Escorial), 1743 (treaty of Fontainebleau) and 1761 (Treaty of Paris) to deal with wars of succession, which troubled Europe during the 18th Century.

vicinity of Vancouver Island made the truth come out.[35] Indeed the French *Assemblée Nationale* [House of Representatives] refused to support Madrid, which had to submit to the British demands. The dynastic alliance had passed away, leaving the Spanish monarchy divided, between pro-French Bourbon aristocrats and anti-French *hidalgos*. Furthermore, the revolutionary contagion was a major concern for the Spanish court. Summoned in Madrid from May 1789, the *Cortes*, or local parliaments, were sent back to avoid the rise of any popular feeling inspired by the French example. Jose Moñino, count of Floridablanca and prime minister, even decided to harden the French-Spanish foreign policy through an ambiguous process. On the one hand, he exhibited a respectful diplomatic relationship with Paris. On the other hand, he maintained contact with the jeopardized and disgraced King Louis XVI, while monitoring the French *Emigrants*.[36] On 21 January 1793, the public execution of the French king fueled a strong counter-revolutionary and anti-French resentment in Spain. Moreover the weakness of the Spanish king, Charles IV, created a vacuum of power, favorable to governmental instability. In February 1792, the experienced and shrewd Floridablanca was disowned and replaced by the colorful Manuel Godoy, a young officer, unknown by the European chancelleries. As a result, the Spanish monarchical system was discredited:

> Manuel de Godoy, was first minister of Spain, a post he acquired by taking as mistress his queen, the much older Maria Luisa. The king of Spain, Charles IV, was in 1807 a doddering old man–mild, trusting, a lover of the countryside, and

[35]Derek Pethick, *The Nootka Connection: Europe and the Northwest Coast 1790-1795* (Vancouver, Canada: Douglas and McIntyre, 1980), 18.

[36]During the Revolution in 1789, most French aristocrats exiled and emigrated to neighbor monarchies.

given spells of insanity. The crown prince Ferdinand, as slippery and devious character, plotted endlessly to seize the throne.[37]

After the battle of Trafalgar (21 October 1805), Spain understood that its forced marriage with France was a growing burden. Manuel Godoy, like his predecessor, decided to secretly collaborate with Great Britain. He did not hesitate to praise the French Emperor to the skies, comparing him to Alexander the Great and Caesar: "history will not remember such great achievements as your majesty's." But he also developed secret relations with the emperor's enemies, while sending a personal representative to London, and spending time in the anglophile salons of Madrid.[38] The unstable domestic situation was mirrored at the international level. In 1806, the Spanish colonies were aware of the home country's decline, and showed signs of nervousness. In Mexico, Miguel Hidalgo y Castillo organized a plot for independence.[39] In Caracas, Francesco Miranda attempted a coup, and Great-Britain even sent expeditionary forces to seize Buenos Aires.[40] Consequently, the unsteady political environment convinced Napoleon that Spain was an unreliable counterpart, and an easy prey for his satellite kingdoms policy.[41]

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[37]Owen Connelly, *Napoleon's Satellite Kingdoms: Managing Conquered Peoples* (Malabar, FL: Robert Krieger Publishing Company, 1990), 16.

[38]Jacques Chastenet, *Godoy, prince de la paix* [Godoy, Prince of Peace] (Paris, France: Librairie Arthème, Fayard, 1944), 184-192.

[39]Will Fowler, *Political Violence and the Construction of National Identity in Latin America* (Gordonsville, VA: Palgrave Macmillan, 2006).

[40]El primer portal de historia argentina. *Las Invasiones Inglesas - La defense* [The British Invasion - Defense], http://www.historiadelpais.com.ar/inva_defensa.htm (accessed 19 November 2010).

[41]Connelly, *Napoleon's Satellite Kingdoms: Managing Conquered Peoples*, 16-18.

In brief, the Spanish monarchy was helpless to deal with its colonial legacy and was permanently torn between its continental and maritime interests. Discredited on a national and an international point of view, the political system experienced a vacuum of power, which incited Napoleon to intervene, ~~–t~~he [Spanish] nation despised its government; it called out, with hue and cry, for revival."[42] Finally, the insurgency was born in 1808 from the conjunction of the French invasion and the failure of the Spanish central power.[43] The Bayonne double abdication would embody and put an end to this political crisis; a six-year struggle had just begun.

An Economic and Financial Crisis

From an economic point of view, Spain was practically bankrupt since the beginning of the 18th Century.[44] No doubt that the conflict with the French and the subsequent occupation worsened the situation, and grew the ranks of the insurgency, with unemployed and forlorn workers. But what could explain this catastrophic environment? The war against Great Britain interrupted the arrival of silver, gold, and raw material coming from Central and South America. In particular, the defeat of Trafalgar was a tipping point and signified the end of the French Spanish transatlantic trade. As a result, no piasters were received or produced by Cadiz in 1807, reducing the flow of money and

[42]Emmanuel Augustin-Dieudonné-Joseph de Las Cases, *Le mémorial de Sainte-Hélène* [Saint-Helena memoirs] (Paris, France: Flammarion, 1951), 732.

[43]Blanco Valdes, *Rey, Cortes y fuerza armada en los origenese de la Espana liberal, 1808-1823* [*Cortes* and Military Forces at the Origin of Liberal Spain] (Madrid, Spain: Siglo veintiuno de Espagna, editores, 1988).

[44]Miguel Artola Gallego, *La hacienda del antiguo regimen* [The Finances of the Old Regime] (Madrid, Spain: Alianza Editorial, 1982).

the local commercial exchanges.[45] In 1811, more than a half of the enterprises linked with the colonial convoy system (*Carrera de Indias*) were bankrupt.[46]

Moreover, Spain remained a rural economy, with harsh weather conditions, and a poorly developed irrigation system.[47] The efforts of industrialization carried out by the Central Junta were insufficient, and most of the manufactured products were imported at great price. The generalization of the American colonial conflicts for independence triggered the definitive rupture of silver supply.[48] Godoy tried to mitigate the dreadful effects over the kingdom‘s finance, while implementing the *desamortización* and seizing the Church‘s lands.[49] But the economic problems in 1804-1805 undermined the reform. That year, harvests were bad and aggravated by a yellow fever epidemic, which hindered

[45]Antonio García-Baquero González, *Cádiz y el Atlántico (1717-1778). El comercio colonial español bajo el monopolio gaditano* [Spanish Colonial Trade under Cadiz Monopoly] (Sevilla, Spain: Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas, 1976)

[46]Antonio García-Baquero González, *Comercio colonial y guerras revolucionarias* [Colonial trade and Revolutionary Wars] (Sevilla, Spain: Escuela de Estudios Hispanoamericanos, 1972).

[47]Diego Garcia, *El ejército francés camino de Madrid: aprovisionamento forzado y malestar popular* [The French Army going to Madrid: Forced Supplies and Violence against the Population] (Madrid, Spain: Ministerio de Defensa, 1994), 222.

[48]On 5 July 1811, Venezuela was the first Spanish American colony to become independent. Mexico (war of Independence: 1810 to 1821) and Argentina (1810 to 1818) would follow on.

[49]The *desamortización* was a Spanish financial reform aiming at seizing the clergy‘s land. This reform was an attempt to reestablish the value of the faltering *reales* by backing them with the confiscated property.

peninsular trade.[50] Catalonia was the most affected of the Spanish provinces and anti-Godoy demonstrations even occurred in Madrid.

Regarding public finance, the study of the Madrid Treasury shows that the average annual income rose from 306 million *reales* in 1784 up to 737 million *reales* in 1796.[51] But the trend reversed in a critical way from 1797, falling to 600 million *reales* in 1807.[52] The pressures of war and the weakening of the American dominions' taxation explained that the regime survival was preferred to economic growth. The coronation of Charles IV and the corruption of his government were also fatal.

> The arrival of Charles IV to the throne in December 1788 did not signify an immediate change in policy, for he kept his father's ministers. The eventual direction of affairs, however, should have been clear from an order to create a fictitious debt of 266,667 *reales de vellon* so as to provide an annuity for the king's favorite and the queen's lover, Manuel Godoy. This worthy was eventually to transfer the annuity to his mistress, Josefa Tudó. With the court giving such an example, a policy of economy became harder to sustain; it was finally dealt a mortal blow by Spain's entry into war with France.[53]

Indeed, the war expenditures compelled the Spanish crown to find sources of revenues by raising new taxes. —The surtax on salt, the levy of four percent on the salaries of civil servants, and other taxes for the service charge fell on the underprivileged."[54] In

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[50]Lawrence Sawchuck, *Gibraltar's 1804 Yellow Fever Scourge* (Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 1998).

[51]The *real* (pl. *reales)* was a unit of currency in Spain. It was replaced in 1864 by the Spanish *Escudo*.

[52]Jacques Barbier, Wars and public finances: the Madrid Treasury, 1784-1807, *The Journal of Economic History* 41, no.2 (1981): 323.

[53]Ibid., 332.

[54]Earl Hamilton, War and Inflation, *The Quarterly Journal of Economics* 59, no.1 (1944): 77.

addition, the silver output from Mexico generated a high rate of inflation. To illustrate that fact, Earl Hamilton developed wage indices representing the cost of commodities and labor in money, but also in a fixed weight of silver, in New Castile. The results are irrevocable: in 1780, the price index was 100; in 1800, the price index increased by sixty per cent.

Consequently, stress was significant throughout all social strata. At the French and British mercy, the aristocracy experienced a feeling of displacement, while losing the American dominions. The Church was hurt by the *desamortización*, losing its property. And the popular classes were heavily touched by taxation and inflation, losing jobs. As a consequence Napoleon's statement on England was as realistic when he analyzed that Spain –would fall victim to bankruptcy, mass unemployment, and possibly even revolution."[55]

In conclusion, the worsening trade with the American colonies, the effects of the blockade and the cost of the alliance with France jeopardized the Spanish economy, and created resentment, which would soon fuel the insurgent fire. The micro-economic exhaustion would also make the occupation unbearable, at a time when the *Grande Armée* was used to live-off the country. Eventually, heavy taxations and war destruction would generate a growing pauperization of the local populace. In this framework, opportunities of looting given to the insurgency should not be underestimated and was certainly an incentive to rebel.

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[55]John Howell, *Wellington's Supply System during the Peninsular War, 1809-1814* (Ann Arbor, MI: McLaughan Publisher, 1987), 92.

A Fragmented Society

From a sociological point of view, Spain was strongly driven by the *Ancien Régime* [Old Regime] model, which was organized in a precise hierarchy. Characterized by privileges, the social pattern was articulated into three main orders: the nobility, the church and the populace. For most of the parties, the French Revolution and the occupation would be the occasion to question this feudal equilibrium. The promotion of class interests would also generate diverging objectives within the insurgency, and would shape extremely diverse guerrillas.

Considering the aristocracy, the Spanish Bourbon court was a copy of Versailles, its French counterpart. Philippe V, the "emigrant king,"[56] imposed French etiquette and displeased the old nobility, more attached to the concept of *Casticismo*, or Spanish purity.[57] The governmental high bureaucracy was even dominated by foreigners of French, Italian or Irish origin.[58] By contrast, Charles III imparted a return to genuine Spanish values, by appointing nationals to the highest governmental positions. They would be often of modest extraction and would also struggle with the high nobility: Jose del Campillo was a "page," whereas Zenon de Somodevilla, and Manuel Godoy were *hidalgos* [Lower Nobility]. The "Prince's malicious delight" to disregarding the established order, angered the Spanish court, and created an environment for change, while dividing the ruling elite. In fact, the significance of "blood nobility," born under the

[56]Henry Kamen, *Philip V of Spain: The King who Reigned Twice* (London: Yale University Press, 2001).

[57]Jean-Joël Brégeon, *Napoléon et la guerre d'Espagne, 1808-1814* [Napoleon and the War of Spain, 1808-1814] (Paris, France: Editions Perrin, 2006), 32.

[58]The Italian cardinal Giulio Alberoni became de facto Spanish prime minister.

Habsburgs, induced an impervious social system; each stratum aspired to differentiate from the others by favoring closed systems, like guilds or brotherhoods. The concept of *Honra*, or honor associated to the membership to a social group, made the difference between integration and exclusion.[59] Traditional cement of the rural communities, the concept of *Honra* would treat the *afrancesados* with infamy during the French occupation. It would also restrain the French's options to develop an efficient intelligence network, while reinforcing rumors and propagandas echoed by the guerrillas.

Besides the nobility, the church was a key player in the Spanish society. Despite internal divisions born during the succession war, the clergy was also a prestigious and influential institution. Its wealth was overestimated by its adversaries, but underestimated by the official statistics. In 1788, Floridablanca assessed that the church's possessions had doubled since the beginning of the century. According to Ensenada's land registry, the clergy's revenues even represented one eighth of the global revenue in the province of Castile.[60] But discrepancies were tangible between the high and low clergy, and within monastic orders. In 1789, 16,689 priests were responsible for 18,922 parishes.[61] Kingpins of rural communities, local priests were poor and usually overwhelmed by their tasks. Contemplative orders were isolated from the society and decadent, whereas mendicants

[59]Jacques Guinard, La société espagnole au XVIIIème siècle [The Spanish Society under the 18th Century], *Bulletin hispanique, Tome 59, No.4* (Paris, France: Persée Editions, 1957), 406.

[60]Ibid., 407.

[61]Antonio Dominguez Ortíz, La sociedad Española en el siglo XVIII [The Spanish Society in the 18th Century]. *Instituto Blames de sociologia, Departamento de historia social*, vol.1 (Madrid: CSIC, 1955), 396.

were well integrated and respected. The church was strongly divided, and would support the guerrilla in an ambiguous and contrasting way.

Regarding the middle-class, liberal professions did not benefit from significant social prestige, to the exception of those who accessed high political functions. Shopkeepers and some rare industrialists did not represent a powerful class, in comparison with France and Great Britain.[62] Marked by ―easte prerogatives" and a thirst for social advancement, the middle-class deeply distrusted the aristocracy. The same mentality characterized peasants, craftsmen and workers whose groupings in corporations pertained more to class protection than solidarity.[63] In a nutshell, the separation between pro and anti-Bourbons, and between higher and lower aristocracy, were major fault lines which split up the aristocracy. The church displayed the same divisions and was more and more pressured by the king's adamant rules. The middle class was sensible to the French Revolution and considered a governmental reform as necessary.[64] The lower class was fragmented but unanimously concerned with Godoy's reform on mandatory military conscription.[65]As a consequence, all these social groups had strong reasons to support change and were legitimate targets for revolution. In fact, the *Dos de Mayos* rebellion and its aftermaths were above all a reaction against the *Ancien Régime*. An over-fragmented

[62]Small business sector prevailed in Spain to the notable exception of Catalonia, where cotton industry was developed.

[63]Ibid., 406.

[64]Raymond Carr, *Spain 1808-1975* (Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 1982), 82-84.

[65]H. Swinburne, *Travels through Spain in the Years 1775 and 1776* (Dublin, Ireland: Elmsly Publication, 1779), 14-15.

insurgency would be the direct outcome of such a divided society and would neutralize any counter-guerrilla systemic approach.

The Regeneration Policy, a Geopolitical Gambit?

Considering the Napoleonic era, 1808 was the apex of the Empire. In the international landscape, the central European theater was now devoid of British and Russian troops. Defeated during the battles of Jena and Auerstädt, Prussia was even compelled to —vassalization." The Peace of Tilsit with Alexander I, the Russian Czar, settled conditions to isolate Great Britain and build-up a coalition to go to war. Consequently, the French position in Europe was strongly reinforced (see Appendix A, figure 1, The Napoleonic Europe). Prussia was humbled; Germans and Poles were firmly incorporated in the Napoleonic system. . . . Napoleon, then, was in a commanding position. Russia was friendly, Prussia shattered, and Austria temporarily neutralized."[66]

Portugal was the next —natural target" on the European chessgame. Not only would its occupation close harbors to the British trade, but it would also provide France with an access to its colonial empire, Brazil. Since 1703, the Treaty of Methuen sealed the alliance between Portugal and Great-Britain. The economic part of the agreement authorized privileged exports of wine and imports of wool.[67] But Lisbon was de facto under London's supervision and was a thorn in Napoleon's side. Portugal was a part of Napoleon's global intention of exerting a tight continental blockade. In November 1807,

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[66]Charles Esdaile, *The Peninsular War, a New History* (New York, NY: Penguin Books, 2003), 2.

[67]Jean-François Labourdette, *Histoire du Portugal* [History of Portugal] (Paris, France: Fayard, 2000).

20,000 soldiers, under the command of General Jean-Andoche Junot, seized Portugal and occupied this nation. But Portugal became secondary as French troops deployed in Spain to secure the lines of communication of Junot's army. The political weakness in Madrid was a great temptation for the Emperor. In these conditions, was the invasion of Spain a political gambit, or a seized opportunity?

Some reasonable factors explained the invasion of Spain. First, denying Great Britain an access to the continent was a major cause. Second, Napoleon's "Roman scheme" implied the constitution of military buffer-zones, protecting the core of the empire. From a strategic perspective, the Iberian Peninsula was the promise of a "Carolingian March" offered to the Empire; a buffer-zone France could easily acquire. Third, the Emperor's vision was not narrowed to Europe and the Imperial staff had built contingency plans to invade Morocco and Algeria.[68] The goal was to turn the Mediterranean Sea into a "French lake," empty of any British vessels. In that framework, the seizure of Spain was a decisive jump-off point to Northern Africa. Alongside these realistic geopolitical reasons, more irrational factors explained the final decision. Napoleon's hatred of the Bourbons and the greatness of the *Maison de France* were powerful drivers, as much as French universalism and the need for the Emperor to consolidate the revolutionary dividends.[69]

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[68]Roger Le Tourneau, Général Spillmann, Napoléon et l'Islam [Napoleon and Islam]. *Revue de l'Occident musulman et de la Méditerranée* [Review for the Muslim West and the Mediterranean Sea] 6, no.1 (Paris, France, 1969), 171-173.

[69]Charles-Maurice de Talleyrand-Périgord, *Mémoires et correspondances du prince de Talleyrand* [The Prince Talleyrand's Memoirs and letters] (Paris, France: Editions Robert Laffont, 2007).

> After a long agony, your nation was perishing. I observed your trouble; I will cure it. . . . Your monarchy is old: my mission is to rejuvenate it. I will improve all your institutions, and you will enjoy the benefits from a painless and smooth reform. Spanish people, remember who your fathers were; and see what you became. This result is not your fault but the bad administration which ruled you. Be hopeful and confident with the actual circumstances. Because I want your nephews to keep my memory and say: —He is the regenerator of our homeland."[70]

Finally, —Replacing the reigning dynasty of an allied monarchy was an unprecedented tour de force."[71] It was also a strategic mistake because it compromised the French Emperor to the European monarchs' eyes and definitely alienated their support.

The Clash of Ideologies: Enlightenment versus Obscurantism

Even if historical reasons made Catholicism an influential factor over the Spanish society, the role of the church is usually overestimated to explain the guerrillas' structure. In fact, —the priest in-arms," conducting an ambush and exhorting peasants to murder, was a seductive picture but an exceptional reality. It was true that religion was a powerful catalysis to express popular discontent, while providing propaganda with a powerful pulpit. Nevertheless, it was also an instrument in the hands of an institution which was mortified by the *desamortización,* and scared of the revolutionary contagion.

On 19 August 1796, the treaty of San Ildefonso instituted a perpetual defensive alliance between the Spanish kingdom and the French Republic. In a certain way, it was a new *Pacte de famille*, which violated the former Catholic order. —It was an unnatural bond . . .

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[70]Napoleon Bonaparte, *Proclamation to the Spanish people*, 25 May 1808 (Madrid, Archivo Historico Nacional, Consejos, Leg 5511, N 10).

[71]Steven Englund, *Napoléon* (Paris, France: Editions de Fallois, 2004), 415.

between the younger Bourbon branch and the Revolution, which had exterminated the older branch; between the Catholic king and a Republic, enemy of the priests."[72]

Even if Godoy attempted to reduce the church's influence, Catholicism was deeply engrained in the Iberian society. Born in Castile in 1468, the Inquisition had stricken as much heretics as the collective mind, and left an enduring footprint. The legend of the *Reconquista* and the Catholic kings, Isabel of Castile and Ferdinand of Aragon, was still vivid.[73] Furthermore, an incomparable mystical movement embodied by Francis Xavier, Ignatius of Loyola and Teresa of Ávila gave religion an incomparable momentum during the sixteenth century. The church was either feared or revered but it left nobody cold-hearted. It was a social component, which counted. But deep divisions would explain controversial attitudes. At first, the *Cortes* of Castile and the Inquisition made efforts to mitigate the effects of *Dos de Mayo* rebellion by condemning Madrid rioters.[74] The aim was to obtain the French good grace and maintain a status quo, favorable to established privileges. The imposed Constitution of Bayonne was respectful of traditions, but Napoleon soon imposed a new text which dispossessed the church, and abolished monastic orders. French 1st Lieutenant Rocca, 2rd *hussards*, confirmed this analysis in his memoirs. –The Spanish priests hated the French by patriotism and interest; because they knew that we wanted to abolish their privileges, and deprived them from

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[72]Maximilien Foy, *Histoire de la guerre de la Péninsule* [Story of the Peninsular War] (Paris, France: De Pradt, 1827), 117.

73The *Reconquista*[Reconquest] was the period when the Catholic kingdoms of Spain succeeded in expelling the Muslims from the Iberian Peninsula, especially out of Andalusia in 1492.

[74]Gérard Dufour, *La Iglesia y el Dos de Mayo, El Dos de Mayos y sus precedentes* [The Church and the 2 May] (Madrid, Spain: ACI, 1992), 540-541.

their properties and their temporal power. Their opinion influenced the vast majority of the nation."[75]

The clergy's fury stirred up preexisting social tensions and turned a resistance to the invaders into a religious crusade against the French and ~~–~~*Malaparte*."[76] Napoleon Bonaparte's soldiers were now heretics and the Revolution was the Devil's masterpiece. In these conditions, the religious quasi-propaganda was a way to appease individual consciousness about the murders of French soldiers. From 1808 to 1809, the nature of violence shifted significantly, while being strongly supported by the religious narrative of a ~~–~~holy war," inspired by Diego José's pamphlet against the French Revolution.[77]

As an example, the catechism professed to the Spanish youth during the war was relevant to understand fanatic violence: ~~—~~Who are the French, my son? Former Christians who became heretics–Who came in Spain? Murat–What are his functions? Deceive, steal and oppress–Which faith does he want to teach us? The corruption of behavior–Is it a sin to kill a French? No, father. It is commendable deed to free our homeland."[78]

> The *guerrilla*, . . . and the exhortatory slogan «*por la Religion, por la Patria y por el Rey*," found the principal support of the clergy, a preponderant force in a country where the centuries old prestige of the Church–effectually not a mere hierocracy, but a living community of people sharing the dogmatic truth of the

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[75]Rocca, *Mémoires sur la guerre des Français en Espagne* [Memoirs related to the French War in Spain] (Paris, France: Gide Fils Libraire, 1814), 8.

[76]Malaparte was a wordplay with Napoleon Bonaparte's name, because *Mal* signifies Evil.

[77]Diego José, *El Soldato católico en la Guerra de religión* [The Catholic Soldier in the War of Religion] (Barcelone, 1793); cited in Jean-marc Lafon, *L'Andalousie et Napoléon* (Paris, France: Nouveau Monde Editions, 2007), 361.

[78]Edouard Guillon, *Les guerres d'Espagne sous Napoléon I^er^* (Paris, France: Pyrémonde, 2005), 35-36.

> Christian liberties and the orthodoxy of the faith asserted on the authority the synoptic Gospels–had succeeded penetrating every level of social life. This patriotism was deeply rooted in many hearts and consciences, in a post-feudal society that had fought united–in the early and late Middle-Ages–the relentless advancing Moorish hordes.[79]

From the French side, the attitude towards the Spanish church was mainly biased by national clichés: ―The Spanish have cruel instincts, which have not been tamed by customs and civilization. The priests Merino and Ballesteros are sequels to Torquemada, Pizarro and Cortés."[80] Unfortunately, the Spanish religious fervor, witnessed by the French soldiers, did not mitigate their opinion about this so-called obscurantism. The words of 1st Lieutenant Rocca are eloquent.

> My interpret was a Flemish deserter whose hunger and fear to be slaughtered by local peasants had forced to surrender after the affair of Burgos; we had nicknamed him Blanco . . . because of the white clothes of a Dominican monk some hussars had given to him. He even carried the enormous headgear belonging to the members of this religious order. When we crossed villages . . . peasants were saluting him respectfully while giving money to the Reverend Père, who did not want to abandon such a lucrative suit.[81]

Obviously the religious factor was significant to understand Spain at that time, and French success would often rely on the way imperial officers would leverage the Catholic Church. Most of the time, mistakes accumulated by the *Grande Armée*, from the strategic to the tactical level, generated a growing rejection of the Enlightenment by the clergy. With the decree of 18 August 1809, Napoleon and Joseph's decision to abolish

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[79]Roberto Scattolin, "Analysis of shared values: Spain 1808." The Napoleon Series research studies, April 2006, http://www.napoleon-series.org/research/miscellaneous/c_spanishnationalism.html (accessed 16 November 2010).

[80]Antoine Laurent Fée, *Souvenirs de la Guerre d'Espagne, 1809-1813* [Memory of the Spain War, 1809-1813] (Paris, France: Lévy Edition, 1861), 26.

[81]Rocca, *Mémoires sur la guerre des Français en Espagne*, 28-29.

the monastic orders had eventually precipitated the last neutrals to the arms of the insurgency.

Even if the ruling classes had been –subverted" by the French ideas, the major part of the –Spanish liberals" was now driven by anti-Napoleonic motivations. From now on, the –enlightened ones" would prefer an alternate model to the French revolution, by supporting smoother transformations embodied by the British political system.

A Complex Insurgency: The Peasant, the Greek Infant, and the Brigand

The description of the prewar Spain is a necessary but insufficient element to understand the Peninsula War without an explanation of the Spanish guerrilla, which consequently requires the examination of its composition, its tactics and objectives.

Irregular warfare was not unknown in the Iberian Peninsula. It was a natural way of fighting, in a culture based on self-reliant communities, isolated by a rugged terrain, and deeply influenced by the sense of resistance and revenge. In 150 BC, the Celtiberians conducted in Castile a sustained guerrilla war against the Roman Republic. [82] A few centuries later, Catalan irregular combatants arose in the same way during the War of the Spanish Succession from 1702 to 1714. But in 1808, guerrillas were not anymore a local event but a generalized phenomenon which would mark the history of irregular warfare. As mentioned by Carl von Clausewitz, –The stubborn resistance of the Spaniards showed what can be accomplished by arming people."[83]

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[82]Polybius, *The Histories* (XXXV.1).

[83]Carl von Clausewitz, *On War (*Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1976), 220.

During the eighteenth and nineteenth century, the Spanish guerrillas would also stimulate theoretical studies focusing on revolutionary conflicts and serving, most of the time, the purpose of political science (See Appendix B, ―guerrilla theoretical approach" for an overview of these analyses). Eventually, 1st Lieutenant Robert de Rocca encapsulated the nature of guerrilla warfare.

> I could now compare two kinds of wars, which were absolutely different; the war of standing armies, which usually do not look at the purpose they support, and the war of national resistance against conquering regular armies. . . . In Germany, we only had to vanquish governments and institutional armies. In the Spanish peninsula, we . . . were fighting people. [84]

Whoever the belligerent, whatever the end, successful ways and means should be determined by population-centric strategies.

Who did contribute the most to destabilize and destroy the *Grande Armée*? As mentioned above, the national historiographies gave different answers to this question. The British historians usually minimized the action of the guerrillas. Napier mentioned that ―the guerrillas never seriously impacted French progress."[85] First, it was a way to praise the success of Wellington. In fact, the influence of the ―Duke of Iron" was indisputable in 1812, when he fully commanded the allied forces in the Peninsula. But before this date, his role was questionable because of his distrust for Spain, and his priority given to the defense of Portugal.

Second, mistrust was usually deep between the Catholic insurgency and the Protestant British soldiers, considered in certain regions as heretics and attacked. The

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[84]Rocca, *Mémoires sur la guerre des Français en Espagne*, 1-2.

[85]William Napier, *History of the War in the Peninsula and the South of France, from the Year 1807 to the year 1814*, Book VIII, Chapter IV (London: Barthes and Lowell, 1882), 186.

guerrilla system was a main concern for Wellington, who envisioned long term catastrophic effects. Colonel John Jones mentioned that Wellington received Spanish letters imploring him to commit the British cavalry to "deliver the country from the guerrillas whose persecutory requirements were more painful than the French occupation."[86]

The French perception was obviously different. The testimony of colonel Jean-Frédéric Auguste Le Mière de Corvey was particularly valuable to understand the imperial mindset. Witness of the G*uerres de Vendée* and deployed in Spain, the French officer summarized his experiences in a Grandmaison-like treatise. In particular, he explained the French defeat through a simple calculus.

> One hundred and fifty or two hundred guerrillas were scattered in Spain, and had each sworn to kill thirty to forty French soldiers a month. Theoretically, it was a total of six thousand fatalities per month for the Grande Armée. The order was to avoid standing military formations but attacking isolated soldiers, small convoys, and couriers. . . . As a year comprises twelve months, we lost approximately eighty thousands soldiers a year, not mentioning the main battles. The war of Spain lasted seven years. Consequently, five hundred thousand men were killed by the guerrillas. As a comparison, the battles of Salamanca, Tallaveyra and Vittoria; the sieges of Saragossa and Tortosa, the fruitless attack on Cadiz and the invasion of Portugal costed us three hundred thousand soldiers.[87]

This rationale was exaggerated but proved how the guerrillas echoed in the French psyche. To give a more realistic description, particular value may be attached to Jacques Houdaille's study, as he assessed that the Imperial army suffered 110,000

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[86]John T. Jones (Col), *History of the War in Spain and Portugal from 1807 to 1814* (London: Egerton, 1814).

[87]Jean Frédéric Auguste Le Mière de Corvey, *Des partisans et des corps irréguliers* [Of Partisans and Irregular Units] (Paris, France: Imprimerie Demonville, 1823).

casualties against the guerrillas.[88] The headcount was still considerable regarding the tensions which weighed over a voracious replacement-system. As a comparison, the *Grande Armée* suffered more casualties in Spain than in Russia.

For the Spanish, the significance of the guerrillas was also the basic narrative of the war for independence. The patriotism tended to overestimate the historical significance of the guerrilla. Indeed, the names of guerrilla leaders, like Francisco Espoz y Mina or Juan Martín Díaz, also known as *El Empecinado*, erased the memory of so many generals, whose defeat made their ―fame."[89]

During the spring of 1808, guerrillas arose in a mix of spontaneous local rebellions, and orchestrated militias that local juntas tried to curb and institutionalize. Everywhere, scattered movements with diverging objectives structured themselves in *partidas* and *cuadrillas*,[90] that is to say, armed parties of local recruitment. On 28 December 1808, the central Junta gave a legal existence to the guerrillas and even bolstered the phenomenon. But the anarchical development of the insurgency worried the Spanish establishment. The Supreme Junta tried to regulate a movement which disrupted the enrollment in the regular army. In April 1809, the Central Junta attempted to assign objectives to the guerrillas in accordance with the royal army and prescribe behavioral

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[88]Jacques Houdaille, ―Pertes de l'armée de terre sous le Premier Empire d'après les registres matricules" [Army Casualties under the First Empire from Soldier Registries], *Population,* No. 27 (Paris, France, 1972), mentioned in Jean-Marc Lafon, *L'Andalousie et Napoléon* (Paris, France: Nouveau Monde Editions, 2007), 119.

[89]Enrique Rodríguez Solís, *Historia popular de la Guerra de la Independencia* [Popular History of the War for Independence] (Madrid, Spain: Roberto Castrovido, 1888).

[90]The term guerrilla refers to skirmish units (as *guerillear* signifies ―to skirmish"), whereas the *partida* is a broader notion associated with a band of men-in-arms.

guidance. –Every inhabitant in the provinces, who is physically able to carry on rifles, is allowed to arm, even with prohibited weapons, to attack and rob French soldiers, either alone, or in bands . . . to hurt and cause as much damage as possible."[91]

The centralization was a failure because the decree could not encapsulate the myriad of interests underlying a fragmented and decentralized insurgency. *Partidas* were permanent or non-permanent movements, whose size could evolve from a few men to thousand of partisans. In the end, an extreme minority of *partidas* coordinated their actions with regular units or neighbor guerrillas. Their position in the field usually correlated with criminalized regions, where contraband offered preexisting underground networks. The recruitment was as composite as the motivations were diverse. Admittedly, peasants and workers usually manned the main body, under the supervision of clergy men, former officers and hidalgos. But highway men and deserters from every belligerent army, contributed to the growth of the insurrection. Generally, the *partidas* were not well armed, and the attack of supply convoys aimed to field the parties with better equipment and to recover food and ammunition.

But what were the real motivations of the insurgents? Xenophobia, Patriotism, hatred of the French, anti-revolutionary trends and Catholic fervor were invoked to explain the generalized upheaval. In fact, more individualized purpose usually fueled the insurgency. The economic constraints were intense and promises of looting, smuggling and easy enrichment should not be underestimated. The fear of conscription was another powerful driver. Even if forced enrollment was not applied by the French Army in Spain,

[91]Jean René Aymes. –Comment la guérilla espagnole a chassé Napoléon," [How the Spanish rebellion did chase Napoleon] *L'Histoire* (Paris, France, February 1985).

rumors and propaganda played a significant role to portray potential *levées en masse*. —Hearing that Marshall Victor was out to enlist them, the young men of Jerez and the other *pueblos* of the district abandoned their homes and rounding up, as many horses as they could from farm and pasture, joined together and took up arms against their oppressors."[92]

Furthermore, the attack of local privileges and grievances linked with collateral damage or retaliation convinced many Spaniards to rebel. As mentioned by Lord Wellington to his brother Lord Wellesley in a correspondence dating from 23 August 1812: —The cruelty . . . that the French saw as the most effective means as limiting the growth of *partidas* served only to multiply their numbers." Eventually, social pressure gave tangible signs to the guerrillas that they defended their homeland, as they were often fighting —under the eyes" of their families. Neither idealistic patriot, like the —Greek infant" depicted by Victor Hugo, nor religious fanatical peasant or brigand, the insurgent was a part of a complex and multiform phenomenon driven by necessity.

The Insurgents' Tactics

In a decree dated from 28 December1808, the central Junta prescribed tactics to counter the French army. The article 22 specified that —the aim of the *partidas* is to intercept the enemy detachments, contain their approach and prevent them to enter in the villages." As mentioned before, the link between the insurgents and the defeated regular army gave an increasing expertise and leadership to guerrillas.

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[92]Charles Esdaile. *Fighting Napoleon, Guerrillas, Bandits, and Adventurers in Spain, 1808*-1814 (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2004), 115.

> The difficulties are particularly great when the people are supported by a considerable nucleus of disciplined troops. The invader has only one army: his adversaries have an army and a people wholly or almost wholly in arms, and making means of resistance out of everything, each individual of whom conspires against the common enemy; even the non combatants have an interest in his ruin and accelerate it by every means in their power. He holds scarcely any ground but that upon which he encamps; outside the limits of his camp everything is hostile and multiplies a thousandfold the difficulties he meets at every step.[93]

If the social environment was of great advantage, rugged terrain was also favorable to guerrilla warfare. Mountainous areas limited the avenues of approach, neutralized maneuverability and logistical support of the French army. The insurgency was like water, avoiding strong points and implementing a fluid combat style. Moreover, main supply routes were extensively monitored by Spanish spies as the sparse road network created the conditions for ambushes.

Cover and concealment allowed the insurgents to conduct hit-and-run actions, to break contact easily or to by-pass interception detachments. In addition, isolated areas and barren lands seriously altered the French operational reach, by reducing the options to live-off the country.

> In these mountainous provinces of the north of the Peninsula, the French, although always conquerors where the . . . Spaniards showed themselves in battle, were not . . . the less assailed by clouds of armed mountaineers, who, never coming near to fight in close ranks, or body to body, retreated from position to position, from rock to rock, on heights, without ceasing to fire even in flying. It sometimes required entire battalions to carry an order of battalion to another distant one. The soldiers, wounded or sick or fatigued, who remained behind the French column, were immediately murdered.[94]

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[93]Antoine Henri Jomini, *The Art of War* (Philadelphia, PA: Lippincot and Co, 1862), 31.

[94]Rocca, cited in Charles Esdaile, *The Peninsular War, a New History* (London: Penguin books, 2003), 256.

Moreover, the support of the population turned the movement into an irresistible phenomenon. First, it provided the insurgents with a robust intelligence network, which allowed them to avoid the main body of soldiers and to strike isolated elements. Second, autarchic rural communities rendered difficult the recruitment of indigenous guides or interpreters.

The insurgents‘ tactics were not only focused on harassment operations and combat actions against the occupying armies. *Guerillerros* also used population-centric mechanisms to reach their objectives. They named and shamed, threatened or kidnapped local authorities, which allegedly supported the French troops, the *afrancesados*. They killed suspected human sources and undermined the French credibility by powerful propaganda actions. The religious factor was obviously instrumental to bolster patriotism and strengthen the rebellion, while supporting *cruzadas* [Religious militia].

The cult of personality was also an efficient tool to influence the population. Guerrilla leaders were portrayed like compassionate patriots and ruthless warriors whose nicknames were known from every Spaniards. Juan Martin, *El Empecinado*, was certainly the most famous of them. The narrative supporting the *cabecillas* was so impactful that the French general Hugo wrote in his memoirs that ―this child of the people [Juan Martin] whose blind patriotism had armed against us, this heroic soldier, seems to me to incarnate the Spanish nation. A poor, fanatical population motivated by the passion for independence which was the victim the king‘s ingratitude [Ferdinand VII].”[95] By contrast, the use of ridicule was used to alter the French morale. Liturgical

[95]Joseph Léopold Sigisbert Hugo, *Mémoires du général Hugo, gouverneur de plusieurs provinces et aide-major général des armées en Espagne* [Memoirs of Brigadier

chants and singings were the main vector for this kind of propaganda. As an example, the French one-eyed general Bonnet was at the center of a popular carol. "*Cuando el general Bonnet*, *Andaba por las Asturias*, *Como era tuerto de un ojo*, *No veia las Alturas*" [96] [When General Bonnet arrived to the Asturias, As he had lost one eye, He could not see any mountains].

In a nutshell, every parts of the population were targeted by this avant-garde information campaign. Hard-liners were glorified as heroes, which rendered the insurgency attractive for potential recruits. Fence-sitters were influenced to, at best, support the guerrillas, at worst, be neutral. *Afrancesados* were isolated and eliminated whereas the French were pictured as heretic invaders, inconsistent and brutal soldiers. Terror was also used through the spectacle of dismembered corpses of soldiers. Savage assassinations stroke the minds of the people and served the escalation of violence by triggering a cycle of retaliation. When Jomini put in his study on warfare that the "Spanish conflict was a war of opinion," he outlined the reality of modern combat.[97]

Nevertheless, the insurgents often made mistakes and accomplished questionable actions. The study of Espoz y Mina's *partida* outlined that unconditional support from the population was not the rule. To man his *partida*, Mina mentioned that "villages were encircled and locals were forced to provide a contingent of young men to prevent any retaliatory acts." The *cabecilla* was even concerned by the criminal attitude of his

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General Hugo, governor of many provinces and Deputy of the Adjudant General for the Armies of Spain] (Paris, France: Ladvocat, 1823), 28.

[96]Edouard Guillon, *Les guerres d'Espagne sous Napoléon I* (Monein, France: Pyrémonde Editions, 2005), 191.

[97]Jomini, *The Art of War*.

soldiers mentioning that ―I am compelled to protect my own life. I must fire some cartridges to be respected."[98] Charles Esdaile in his discussion about the guerrillas asserted that ―French-style accusations that none of the guerrillas were anything more than brigands go too far, but even so the association of *partidas* and plunder was so strong enough to become proverbial, ‗*Viva Fernando y vamos robando*!' [Long live Fernando and let's go robbing].[99] Some French junior leaders would exploit this questionable trait to win locals' hearts and minds.

Eventually, the military significance of guerrillas' actions was ambiguous but a constant pressure on the French main lines of communication and the consequent attrition forced the *Grande Armée* to dedicate a large amount of soldiers to escort convoys, protect supplies and man a myriad of outposts. Under the circumstances, such principles of war as economy of force and mass were violated by a growing need to maintain a large footprint over the Spanish territory. Trying to make efforts everywhere, the French dispersed their troops and were not able to achieve their operational objectives.

Conclusion

Since the 18th century, Spain was torn by deep social tensions, and faced a multiform crisis which would have burst into violence in any case.[100] However, Napoleon's intervention aggravated Spain's situation as certainly as it improved its

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[98]Francisco Espoz y Mina, *Précis de la vie du général Mina* [Precis of General Mina's life] (Paris, France: Imprimeries Pinard, 1825), 162.

[99]Charles Esdaile, *The Peninsular War*, 265.

[100]Gabriel H Lovett*, Napoleon and the Birth of Modern Spain* (New York, NY: New York University Press, 1965).

legacy. At the political level, the conflict between the competing French and British imperialisms overlapped and fueled a struggle between two visions of the world: The Spanish old regime versus the spirit of the French Revolution. From a military point of view, the defeat of the Spanish armies directly fed the insurgency by providing leaders, expertise and soldiers. However, motivations were as diverse as the society was divided. A monstrous hydra was born and the Central Junta‘s attempts to curb it would be unsuccessful. According to Galula‘s counterinsurgency model, an insurgency needs a cause to develop and possibly a just cause as a force-multiplier. Patriotism, and the Carlist exaltation would provide the first element. Catholicism and rural fanaticism would wage the second one.

Looking at the model provided by the FM 3-24.2, every five categories of root causes were deeply engrained in the Spanish environment. First, Xenophobia and anti-French resentment shaped the identities of the Spanish provinces and merged them gradually into a single nation. Second, religion sufficed to gain support of the rural populace and provided the propaganda with impactful themes. Third, the preexisting economic failure exacerbated resentment from every social stratum. Fourth, the occupation aggravated the situation as living-off the country conducted to the pauperization of Spain. Fitfh, the spiral of repression and the circle of retaliation definitively rendered the situation unbearable.

In the end, guerrillas‘ tactics imposed constant pressures on the French troops and had operational and strategic effects. On the one hand, they contributed to dilute the *Grande Armée* over a rugged terrain. On the other hand, it severely attritioned the French Army and partly diverted its conventional operations.

Despite this gloomy situation, the French proved to be able to make progress in the short-term in two major provinces, Aragon and Andalusia. The following chapter will focus especially on these case-studies to assess the successes and understand their origin.

CHAPTER 3

SUCHET VS THE HYDRA

> Convinced that the violence of the arms wins battles, but does not ensure an enduring conquest, he [Soult] figured out how to create a civilian administration. . . . As it was impossible for the people to trust this administration as long as movements across the mountains would be jeopardized by swarms of insurgents, he took the decision to pursue them without respite. He wanted to curb resistance in Aragon, before enlarging the circle of his conquests, by settling strong bases for futures operations.
>
> — William Napier, *History of the War in the Peninsula and the South of France, from the year 1807 to the year 1814*

Molded by an atypical background, and inheriting from a rebel province, Marshall Louis-Gabriel Suchet capitalized on his generalship to build a disciplined and effective army in Spain.[101] From a military point of view, he systematized the use of mobile columns, operating from a well-designed network of fortresses, and supported small-unit leadership to adapt to guerrilla warfare. He also found solutions other than military to pacify his province, by encouraging the emergence of a viable Spanish administration, facilitating economic development, and assisting civil-military integration.

Marshall Suchet as a Man and as an Officer

In 1809, Major General Suchet was sent in Spain to take over the reins of III Corps. His mission was to pacify Aragon and to conquer Lower Catalonia. Six years later, he had earned an unmatched reputation as a warrior and an administrator.

[101] The title of "Marshal" was technically a dignity rather than a rank. The highest permanent rank in the *Grande armée* at this period was Major General, or *général de division*.

In his exile in Saint-Helena, Napoleon had many conversations with his first surgeon, the Irish doctor Barry Edward O'Meara. The latter reported the conversation he had with the Emperor: "I asked Napoleon, who was the most skillful French general? It is difficult to say, he replied, but I think it was Suchet."[102] Another quotation collected by Lady Campan in her personal diary confirmed Napoleon's apologetic opinion: "The Emperor asserted that if he had had two Suchets in Spain, he would have conquered Spain and held her. His clever mind and his sense of the administration explained his successes."[103]

> Given Napoleon's imperatives, Suchet's military administration should be regarded as a success. After Suchet's operations in 1809, partisan resistance within Aragon was extremely limited and only in 1812, when Espoz y Mina began creating three battalions in Upper Aragon, did significant military opposition renew.[104]

Considering the twenty-six Napoleonic marshals, he was the only one to receive his baton during the Peninsular War. And in many regards, he was an unorthodox officer, whose personal background explained his wartime performance. Even if Suchet's career was not as flamboyant as Murat or Lannes' trajectories, his route was certainly the most conducive to face the challenges of Aragon.

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[102]Barry O'Meara, *A Voice from Saint-Helena* (London: Carrey and Lea, 1882), 461.

[103]Jeanne Louise Campan, *Journal anecdotique* [Anecdotic Journal], mentioned in the preface of Louis Gabriel Suchet, *Mémoires du maréchal Suchet, duc d'Albuféra sur ses campagnes en Espagne depuis 1808 jusqu'en 1814* [Memoirs of Marshal Suchet, Duke of Albufera, on his Campaigns in Spain from 1808 to 1814], Tome I (Paris, France: Adolphe Bossange, 1828), xliv.

[104]Don Alexander, *Rod of Iron*, 239.

On 2 March 1770, Suchet was born the elder son of a silk manufacturer at Lyons. Jean-Pierre, his father, was also chancellor of the general hospital and administrator of the provincial lodge. Belonging to the upper bourgeoisie, Suchet attended brilliant schools in economics and was naturally destined to take the family's business. Under the paternal supervision, he was introduced in 1787 to silk manufacture and trading. Two years later, Jean-Pierre passed away, leaving his 19 year old son in charge of the company.

When the Revolution broke out, the economic environment was harshly degraded. Moreover, Suchet was enthusiastic with the "Enlightenment" and its revolutionary ideas. As a result, he enrolled in the National Guard. During the 1793 *levée en masse*, he was elected to command the 4th *Ardèche* battalion. His unit was deployed to fight the British at the siege of Toulon where he captured Major General O'Hara. His battalion was integrated in the brigade of Laharpe, and he fought in many battles during the campaign of Italy. In 1795, Suchet seized the heights of Mount Calvo, captured three Austrian flags and contributed to the victory of Loano, decisive to gain Lombardy.[105] In 1796, Suchet was attached to the brigade of Rampon which was the operational reserve and elite troop for the Army of Italy.[106] At the head of 1st battalion, 18th *demi-brigade*, Suchet participated to the battles of Basano, Cerea, Mantua, and later at Arcola and Rivoli.

[105]Bernard Bergerot, *Le Maréchal Suchet* (Paris, France: Taillandier, 1986), 38.

[106]Edouard Gachot, *Histoire militaire de Masséna, la première campagne d'Italie* [Military History of Massena, the First Campaign of Italy] (Paris, France: Perrin, 1901).

Wounded in Neumarkt, Suchet became colonel in 1797 and was granted the command of the 18th *demi-brigade* for ~~h~~is military talents and purest patriotism."[107]

Serving with bravery in Switzerland, Suchet was promoted brigadier general and became, in 1798, French Marshal Guillaume Brune's chief of staff. He fought at Novi under Major General Barthélémy Joubert and his reputation grew up so that Major General Jean Moreau, Marshal André Masséna, and even Bonaparte requested him to be their personal chief of staff. In 1800, Bonaparte came back from Egypt and landed in Fréjus to seize power: the Executive Directory was replaced by the Consulate. At the same time, Masséna reorganized the victorious but exhausted Army of Italy. Suchet received the command of two divisions, captured Verona and Castelfranco. He also prevented the Austrian invasion of France and set the conditions for the successful crossing of the Alps by Bonaparte. In January 1801, he occupied Padua where he was appointed governor. In this position, he reorganized the local administration, supported and enforced public security. As the Army of Italy was disbanded after the Austrian defeat, Suchet became Inspector of Infantry. His sense of organizational management and his combat experience were instrumental to this designation. Promoted major general in 1803, Suchet had the occasion to observe the *Grande Armée* during his tour. He became familiar with human resources, equipment, finance, and sustainment process.

In 1805, he served as a division commander in IV Corps under Soult before his transfer to V Corps. He played a significant role in Ulm and Austerlitz. The next year, he was in action at Saalfeld and Jena before succeeding Masséna in provisional command of V Corps. At the head of the 1st division, Suchet trained with V Corps in the Boulogne

[107]Paul CharlesThiébault, *Mémoires* (Paris, France: Plon, 1897).

camp, when he was ordered to go in Saragossa to take the command of the French troops in Aragon.

On the eve of his departure, Suchet was well prepared to face the challenges of counterinsurgency. During his civilian experience in private business, he had learned the mechanisms of economy, tax system and trade. Battle-hardened in the Alps, he had excelled in mountain warfare while using light columns against the Austrians. He also confronted the *Barbet* guerrilla, as French and Italian peasants organized a popular upheaval against the French Republic during the Austrian invasion.[108] He eventually witnessed the misbehavior of the Army of Italy and the effects of an occupying force on the population. His participation in the German and Prussian campaigns provided him with a strong background of conventional warfare. There he learned to blend skirmish order, line and column. He also remarked that the protection of the lines of communication and the rear combat area were essential for success in the field. As an inspector, he had the opportunity to work with all the French agencies while developing his skills in organizational leadership. Eventually, his governance experience in Padua gave him the keys to understand and manage public administration. In conclusion, Suchet‘s personal background and military assignments produced an atypical leader, who could understand Spain‘s subtlety, deal with the intricacies of counterinsurgency, and find solutions other than military. As a result, he would neither be disoriented, nor surprised by the juxtaposition of conventional and unconventional warfare.

[108]In 1799, the *Barbets* were Calvinists who organized counter-revolutionary actions against the French in the Southern Alps.

The Province of Aragon

Located in Northeastern Spain and bordering France, the region of Aragon delineates a rectangle which comprises the provinces of Huesca, Saragossa, and Teruel. Covering an area of 48,000 square miles, Aragon is mainly dominated by the Pyrenean foothills and the fertile river Ebro depression. Suchet described in his memoirs the area of operation in the following way.

> One cannot walk through many leagues without crossing several narrow passes, comparable to Thermopylae or the Caudine Forks, where two or three hundred of men would suffice to block whole armies. . . . Major rivers are impracticable. . . . Such a country, highly appropriate for a defensive war . . . is difficult to conquer.[109]

In 1809, the French geographer Alexandre Laborde travelled in Spain and compiled his observations in a gazetteer.

> Aragon is one of the largest Spanish provinces but one of the least populated, even if her soil is fertile and her climate temperate. The area is sixty-six leagues long–two hundred and sixty-four kilometers–from North to South, and forty leagues wide–one hundred and sixty kilometers–from East to West. The province comprises one archbishopric, six bishoprics, six thousand parishes, twenty-one hospitals, two universities, two hundred and thirty nine cities and six hundred and eighty eight villages. Three rivers ran through the province, the Minares, the Turia and the Ebro Rivers. . . . The country is very rugged but is also covered with rich plains and fertile valleys.[110]

Mountains spread across almost the entire province and were articulated in two main systems. The Pyrenean barrier to the north restricted the line of supply to a single and poorly maintained route to France. In the south, the Iberian Sierra prevented any movements to Castile or Valencia. Restricting any reinforcement from neighboring units,

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[109]Suchet, *Mémoires*, 46.

[110]Alexandre Louis Joseph de Laborde, *Itinéraire descriptif de l'Espagne* [Descriptive route of Spain] (Paris, France: Firmin Didot, 1827), 198.

the two mountain ranges also provided insurgents with safe havens and deprived the French army of its mobility. On the contrary, the river Ebro-Spain's largest river in volume, ran west-east across the Saragossa province and constituted a vital area. It provided water to arable lands and opened up the region while snaking to the sea. In 1809, a waterway built under Charles V, the Imperial canal, existed but was in bad condition. The region could be prosperous but the lack of population reduced the opportunities to exploit local resources.

The 1788 survey estimated that 623,300 people lived in Aragon.[111] As a consequence, the density of population was very low and could not provide sufficient manpower to meet the agricultural and industrial needs. This factor could have been an advantage for the French, regarding force requirements in counterinsurgency. But the III Corps order of battle in May 1809 numbered 10,527 combatants. In these conditions, Suchet‘s forces could not match with our present minimum recommendation of 25 counterinsurgents for every 1,000 residents in an area of operations.[112]

At the end of the day, the physical description of the area of operations implied tactical and operational limitations. First, rugged terrain neutralized the *Grande Armée*‘s deadliest weapons. Cavalry charges were restricted to the plains (around six percent of the region), where insurgents barely operated.

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[111]Ibid., 237.

[112]US Army professional writing archives. April 19, Volume 8.4, *A historical Basis for Force Requirements in Counterinsurgency*, http://www.army.mil/-news/2010/03/25/36324-a-historical-basis-for-force-requirements-in-counterinsurgency/index.html (accessed 6 January 2011).

Artillery could not be moved easily while current techniques practiced direct fires, which proved ineffective in mountainous areas. Second, the lines of communication were reduced to a few poor routes, easily monitored by the insurgents. Third, difficulties of communication between Navarre, Catalonia and Castile impeded operations across the borders and prevented operational cooperation between friendly units. Nevertheless, Aragon afforded two major advantages. The economic potential was real and created a favorable framework for trade and development. Last but not least, the proximity with France facilitated the evacuation of casualties, reduced the distance with the national depots and allowed a more responsive replacement system.

The human study of Aragon generated complementary conclusions to understand the III Corps operational environment. The large footprint of the Catholic Church, mentioned by Laborde, was a clue for any commanders who considered priests as power-brokers and relays. At first sight, leveraging religion was likely to be a tool to pacify the region. In addition, the isolation from other provinces and the fragmentation of the Iberian Sierra indicated the existence of autarkic communities, more sensitive to the ~~"d~~ivide to rule" method. Suchet would take all the above factors into consideration and turn them to his best advantage.

Reshaping an Efficient Military Tool

From 1809 to 1812, Suchet conducted the ~~"s~~word and spade policy" thanks to an instrument he forged. This was not his first try, as he gained organizational experience while rebuilding the Army of Italy under Masséna. But he also understood that discipline and rigor in III Corps would mitigate the effects of an occupying army. As observed by

Napier, Suchet initially sought to create an efficient military tool prior to any military operations.

> Convinced that the force won battles, but could not ensure alone an enduring conquest, he [Suchet] envisioned the creation of a civilian administration. . . . As it was impossible for the people to trust this administrative system as long as swarms of guerrillas would run the mountains, he decided to chase them without respite. He wanted to curb any resistance in Aragon anticipating that he had to form a flexible army, capable to execute the greatest deeds.[113]

Suchet left in France his battle-hardened division. Trained in Boulogne, the 17th *régiment d'infanterie*, 34th, 40th, 64th, and 88th *régiments d'infanterie de ligne* were ~~"~~like a Roman legion, moved by a same spirit . . . a disciplined, united, and tireless force."[114]

However, the III Corps commander managed for a small portion of his former unit to accompany him to Spain. This rear-guard was composed of one company belonging to the 40th *régiment* and the entire 64th *régiment.* These units would be used as a training model for the Army of Aragon and an example to follow. Suchet would need them to restore discipline in an army he found in shambles. In a correspondence he addressed to the Ministry of War on 1 June 1809, he delivered his initial estimate. ~~"~~I found every service in a pathetic order. No more transport, no more aid kits. . . . The artillery which should be composed of forty guns is equipped with no more than sixteen

[113]Napier, *History of the War in the Peninsula and the South of France, from the year 1807 to the year 1814*, 798.

[114]Suchet, *Mémoires*, 8.

guns, serviced by poor soldiers. . . I saw naked and stripped regiments like in 1793, soldiers without shoes or uniforms; I found a detestable officer corps."[115]

On paper, III Corps was strong with 30,000 soldiers and 3,800 horses. In reality, the incomplete manning, the dysfunctional replacement system and the casualties put at best 10,000 soldiers and 600 horses on the ground (see Appendix C: III Corps order of battle). The Army of Aragon originated from the "*Corps d'observation des Côtes de l'Océan*," [Atlantic Coast monitoring corps] which deployed in Spain in January 1808 under the command of Marshal Bon-Adrien Jeannot de Moncey. Third Corps was exhausted by the siege of Valencia and suffered heavy attrition in Saragossa. The morale was low as pay was irregularly distributed and sustainment scarcely managed to feed and clothe the troops. From an operational point of view, the situation was not favorable for a smooth transition and the reorganization of III Corps. The Spanish general Joachim Blake penetrated in Aragon with 10,000 soldiers and defeated Suchet at the battle of Alcañiz on 23 May 1809. Fortunately, the withdrawal was conducted in order and Blake did not decide to pursuit the French forces.

As a result, Marshall Suchet benefited from the lull to reconstitute his forces while conducting intensive training. He explained his aim to Marshal Henri Clarke, Ministry of war, in a letter dated from 4 June 1809, which was to bolster the French morale. "I keep my troops under constant activities, standing before dawn while reconnaissance units push forward . . . I hope, by those means, to strengthen morale."[116]

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[115]S.H.A.T, Lettre au ministre de la guerre [Letter to the Ministry of War], C8.28 cited in Reynaud, *Contre-guérilla en Espagne*, 77.

[116]Ibid., 79.

Gradually he restored discipline by sacking incompetent officers and executing deserters at the front of the troops. He used his influence to refurbish III Corps with uniforms, raincoats and shoes. In mid-June 1809, the living conditions of the French soldiers had improved and the intensive training set the conditions to re-take the initiative. Suchet defeated Blake‘s army in María on 15 June 1809 and achieved the pursuit in Belchite on 18 June 1809.

The conventional threat in Aragon, represented by the Spanish royal army, was no more. Marshal Suchet could now on focus his efforts on III Corps. He managed to recover two battalions deployed in Navarre, and the main body of the artillery and engineer units, used during the siege of Saragossa. He also got back the 116th and 117th *régiments d’infanterie de lign*e, deployed in Old Castile as an operational reserve.

On 1 August 1809, III Corps was close to her theoretical order of battle with 25,966 soldiers, 2,125 horses and 26 guns. These figures were certainly exaggerated whereas available units for maneuver were constrained by security missions, which consumed up to 12,000 soldiers. However, the increase of manpower in such a constrained time was to the commander‘s credit. Eventually Suchet had at his disposal a victorious army which had demonstrated their valor to the eyes of the population. In 1812, French Marshal Etienne Mac Donald confirmed the status of the Army of Aragon in a memorandum: ―HI Corps army was beautiful, clothed . . . well trained, had a solid link with the depots and was fully sustained.”[117]

[117]S.H.A.T, Mémoire de Mac Donald sur l‘état comparé des armées de Catalogne et d‘Aragon [Mac Donald‘s Memorandum related to the Comparison between the Army of Catalonia and the Army of Aragon], 1812, C 8.65.

Counter-Guerrilla Methodology and Tactics

With a reconstituted and capable army, Suchet was now able to conduct military operations against the *partidas*. But he could not ensure a stable conquest and rebuild the local administration as long as guerrillas operated in his area of responsibility.

At the same time, Suchet could not fully transition to an irregular posture because he needed to keep in mind the Spanish-British opponents, and establish a solid base for future operations. Consequently, the use of III Corps necessitated a fragile balancing between irregular and regular threats. In the context of an occupying force, Suchet combined a strict control of the operational tempo with a "fortress strategy" to solve the dilemma of freedom of action. Doing so, he was able to give his subordinates enough resources to conduct decentralized actions against specific objectives. In a nutshell, his major military adaptation was not organizational but conceptual.

In parallel, the evolution of French conventional warfare in Spain supported the development of counter-guerrilla techniques. The way the French artillery evolved during the Peninsular War illustrated this fact.

> Along with poor road conditions the French were forced to reorganize and refit their artillery batteries. The standard artillery pieces in the French armies were the 6 pounder and 12- pounder cannon. The artillerists slowly replaced these larger guns with smaller, lighter 4 pounders and 8 pounders that were easier to move along the rough Spanish roads.[118]

In this environment, units deployed in the Sierra with fire support, and had opportunities for technological adjustments. Artillerists modified the gun carriages so that they could be assembled and disassembled. Firing techniques were also refined as

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[118]John Elting, *Swords Around a Throne: Napoleon's Grande Armee* (New York, NY: Free Press, 1987), 262.

howitzers' high arc trajectories were more fitted to hit covered targets in slopes and reversed slopes.

Other branches also adapted to counter-guerrilla warfare in rugged terrain. The Imperial cavalry was organized to fulfill offensive missions. *Hussards* and *Chasseurs à cheval* conducted screening and flanking missions whereas dragoons were able to fight as a mounted or dismounted infantry. Representing the heavy component, *Carabiniers* and *Cuirassiers* were decisive in the battle by their charges. In Spain, dragoons proved to be efficient thanks to their versatility. They could fight as infantrymen, and then quickly remount to pursue the enemy. They were so successful that the Imperial staff massed them in Spain, where they won the nickname of Spanish dragoons.[119] In III Corps, the 4th *Hussards* was trained and fitted to fight in the ~~"d~~ragoon style" and react swiftly to ambushes. The 13th *Cuirassiers* was task-organized to reinforce the infantry battalions and form ~~"c~~ombined-arms companies." (See Appendix D, illustrations 3 and 4). Last but not least; the French infantry had learned in the battlefield how to dissolve battalion formations into skirmish order.[120] Such tactics improved their performance against the British during the Peninsular War and created infantry which could transition from one posture to another against dismounted guerrilla fighters. Taking benefit of conventional capacities, Suchet also capitalized in his irregular warfare experience to find innovative solutions.

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[119]Ibid., 238.

[120]James Arnold, ~~"A~~ Reappraisal of Column Versus Line in the Peninsular War," *The Journal of Military History* 68, no. 2 (April 2004): 541.

At the operational level, he gave his units freedom of action while synchronizing the tempo of regular and irregular operations. In particular, he identified that conventional successes opened favorable windows to launch counter-guerrilla operations, while increasing the pool of available units. Moreover, the *partidas* usually benefited from the presence of Spanish regular forces which provided ammunition, food and support. After the battle of Belchite, Suchet focused his effort to defeat Gayán's insurgent network. He took advantage of the fall of Tortosa to attack *El Empecinado*'s partidas. Eventually, he chased Obispo after the seizure of Tarragona.

The second part of Suchet's operational success relied in its ability to build a network of operating bases which combined versatility and cost-effectiveness. Thanks to the tactical superiority of the French artillerists and sappers in siege warfare, III Corps seized Saragossa, Huesca, Alcañiz, Catalayud and Tortosa. Suchet carefully analyzed the garrison of his troops through the lens of mutual support, economy of force and flexibility. For example, the seizure of Jacca secured III Corps supply from France and offered a powerful base to fight guerrillas in the Pyrenees. The capture of Fraga offered a base for counter-guerrilla operations on the right bank of the Ebro, as well as an attack position in the direction of Catalonia. All these garrisons were manned with reinforced battalions, were autonomous for up to four months, and supported by well furnished stores. Even if they immobilized a huge number of soldiers, the comparison with other provinces showed a less dispersion of forces. This stronghold strategy allowed the French troops to consolidate their gains and extend gradually their radius of action in accordance with an oil-spot approach (See Appendix A, figure 5.) In two years, Suchet extended his influence over Aragon before seizing Lérida. When total occupation of Lérida was

achieved, he then besieged Tortosa. From 1811 to 1813, he implemented the same clear-hold-build process to pacify the province of Tarragona and the kingdom of Valencia. Basically, the control of urban areas and the establishment of nodes, close to the populace, responded to the logic of pacification. ~~–~~Suchet's strong garrison policy was probably the best military response. Powerful garrisons protected the *afrancesados*, supported the imperial administration, denied the partisans access to the means of production without exhausting the troops dedicated to lengthy mobile column pursuits."[121]

The French units were permanently attached or assigned to their garrisons in order to ensure a better situational understanding, ~~–as~~ the habit of the same lodgments familiarized III Corps' soldiers with the inhabitants and vice versa."[122] As an example, the 115th *régiment de ligne* was garrisoned in Caspe, during the entire duration of the Peninsular War. First Lieutenant Berthon, infantry platoon leader in this regiment, described the advantages of such quarters.

> The 115th had occupied Caspe since the beginning of the war and was always quartered there. The attachment between the regiment and the city was not imaginable… Ordinarily lodged by poor people where he recollected the image of his own family, he [the French soldier] put down his overriding duty and the ~~–f~~*uria francese*."[123]

[121]Don Alexander, *Rod of Iron*, 90.

[122]Suchet, *Mémoires,* 260-261.

[123]Berthon, *Historique du 115ème Régiment d"infanterie* (Mamers, France: Presse régimentaire du 115 de ligne, 1898), 68.

Even if this portrait seemed idyllic, links with the population were confirmed by other officers in Aragon, like Major Donin de Rosière, and numerous traits of humanity were witnessed in the whole province.

At the tactical level, Suchet sought to increase the mobility of his troops by constituting autonomous units. His intent was to "multiply [his forces] by the rapidity of their movements." Many other French generals, like Reille or Thiébaud, experienced "flying columns" in Naples or in the Piémont, but Suchet systematized their use in Aragon. He also downsized the mobile columns at the battalion or company level and put the emphasis on small leaders' selection: "This war requires more and more officers and the best ones, because they are often alone and need to operate by themselves."[124] The "flying columns" were composed of the most efficient and disciplined troops. "Battle-hardened soldiers, led by experimented leaders, courageous and at the same time careful . . . always in the field. That sort of expedition required as much physical force as patience, valor as intelligence, the men who were destined to this fight had to endure the most painful marches and the harshest rigours."[125]

Multiple reports demonstrated that the employment of small units really made the difference to conduct counter-guerrilla operations in Aragon. In October 1809, a band of one hundred of insurgents was defeated by Captain Monnot in Lecera.[126] In December

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[124]S.H.A.T, lettre du général Reille au major général [Letter from Brigadier General Reille to Adjudant General Berthier], 9 Septembre 1811 [9 September 1811], C8.55 cited in Reynaud, *Contre-guérilla en Espagne*, 99.

[125]Charles Théodore Beauvais de Préau, *Victoires, conquêtes et désastres, revers et guerres civiles des Français*[French Victories, Conquests, Disasters, Drawbacks and Civil Wars] (Paris, France, 1820), 78.

[126]Suchet, *Mémoires du Maréchal Suchet,* 66.

1809, the first company of the 114th *régiment de ligne* engaged and killed the insurgent leader Castanera in the vicinity of Balearia. On 25 July 1811 a company of the 4th *Hussards* surprised a column of 400 insurgents at night and destroyed it.

The main task of the mobile columns was to degrade and defeat the irregular units. For that purpose, –dynamic and deliberate targeted operations" were two options at the commander's disposal. The choice was based on the type of available units, the size of the *partidas* and the quality of the intelligence driving the operation. The first course of action consisted of short range, daylight patrols. The follow-on operations were conducted at night and consisted of fixed observation outposts. Passes, choke-points and water sources were particularly monitored, and patrols considered men-at-arms caught at night as enemies.

Deliberate pursuits were larger-scale operations which aimed to destroy *partidas* whose manpower was comparable to standing armies. Planned in accordance with the insurgents' patterns of action, deliberate targeting operations were designed as a movement to contact. During this phase, a reinforced brigade gained contact and attacked the insurgents. As withdrawal was expected, several other flying columns were kept in alert to support the pursuit and shape the final destruction. One officer of III Corps described this type of operations in the following way.

> This time it was his [the guerrilla's] turn to be surprised and forced to beat a hasty retreat. During this expedition, I was in command of the detachment . . . another detachment maintained communications with the small punitive column and was placed between us and them. We sent messages using olive tree leaves of specially shaped pieces of blank paper, the messages of which were agreed

beforehand [and] carried by local people. In this way we were able to surprise many them.[127]

The 1809 pursuit of Mina by French Brigadier General Jean Harispe, Suchet's chief of staff, illustrated this method. Commanding a flying column armed by the 114th *régiment de ligne*, Harispe reconnoitered in direction of Sang essa. Coordinating his action with Brigadier General Louis Henri Loison's column, he conducted the pursuit along Sos, Lodosa, and Puente la Reyna. Constantly pressured, Mina's insurgents were finally dispersed. The same year, Colonel Henriod led a 1,500 man strong column, consisting of the 14th *régiment de ligne*, the 2nd *régiment de la Vistule* and the 13th *Cuirassiers*. After a two month pursuit, he destroyed Villacampa and his *partida*.

Deliberate targeting was not the most likely course of action because it simultaneously required actionable intelligence and available troops. The lack of coordination between the French corps also facilitated the escape of some insurgents which understood ―that they could usually avoid pursuit merely by passing into a neighboring province, [as] communications were too poor and French commanders were too jealous of their autonomy to undertake joint operations."[128]

Besides the use of ―flying columns," tactical units adapted to their operational environment while seeking for surprise and rapidity. The study of memoirs and correspondence produced by French junior-officers shows that techniques and procedures were experimented and shared. The lack of tactical testimonies out of Aragon does not

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[127]Mark Reeves, ―The Iberian Leech: Napoleon's Counterinsurgency Operations in the Peninsula, 1807-1810" (Master's thesis, U.S. Army Command and General Staff College, Fort Leavenworth, KS, June 2004), 58.

[128]Glover, *Legacy of Glory*, 31.

allow drawing conclusions for Spain. But the great coherence of the officer corps belonging to the Army of Aragon, the modest dimensions of the area and the high tempo of combined-arms operations facilitated the exchange of information and best practices. Suchet was so aware of his lieutenants and captains' deeds that he extensively mentioned them in his memoirs. Major Rubichon from the 13th *régiment de Cuirassiers*, Captain Lecomte from 115th *régiment d'Infanterie*, or Captain Berthaux from 114th *régiment d'Infanterie* epitomized a generation of junior leaders, forged in Aragon under the rule of irregular warfare.

Encouraged to close with the population, small unit leaders coped with the language barrier. The need to communicate was vital but volunteer and efficient interpreters were under the threat of assassination. At the higher level, Marshal Suchet was careful to assign as much as possible Spanish-speaking officers to key positions. At lower level, he partly solved the problem by using *afrancesados* out of their native provinces. In Aragon, generals and colonel's interpreters came from Navarre and Catalonia. Recruits from French Catalonia were also dispatched in the brigades. But the need for translation was still significant. One original solution was developed from scratch. As mentioned by First Lieutenant Rocca, Latin was an unexpected vernacular language, whose influence was tightly linked with a deeply rooted Catholicism. "Latin was very useful in Spain because every priest was used to speak it pretty well . . . . A young clerk even brought me to the village's teacher, who was happy to speak Latin and explain me how he reached this degree of knowledge."[129]

[129]Rocca, *Mémoires sur la guerre des Français en Espagne*, 44.

Suchet found this cultural feature so significant he collected it in his memoirs while assessing the Aragonese level of education.

> Aragon displayed two universities, one in Zaragossa and the other in Huesca. . . . If neither colleges nor education houses could be found, Latin teachers were almost everywhere. Without a lot of expense, the poorest artisan could easily provide his children with the knowledge of this language, which sufficed to make them admitted in monastic orders.[130]

Based on this assumption, III Corps made a dual usage of Latin. First, it was the insurance that French battalions would be able to communicate wherever deployed. Second, it was a convenient way to build a network of sympathizers among the local elites while preserving the secret of the conversations.

In terms of tactics, small units made systematic use of deception, by ~~–m~~arches, counter marches, and feints along so called impracticable itineraries."[131] One course of action, constantly mentioned by French officers like Captain Marcelle or Major Parquin, was the simulation of a retreat to attract the insurgents in the open field. On 23 September 1809, Colonel Robert, commanding officer of the 117th *régiment d'Infanterie* made contact in Fonz with Renovales, an insurgent leader who operated at the Calatonian border.

> Colonel Robert, while moving to contact, used a stratagem to tempt the enemy out of an inexpugnable position. After several weak attempts, he feigned a withdrawal and lured the insurgents after him. Turning around, he finally hit them.[132]

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[130]Suchet, *Mémoires*, 293.

[131]Thiébault, *Mémoires,* 287.

[132]Suchet, *Mémoires*, 62.

Colonel Henriod, commanding officer of the 14th *régiment de ligne*, used another ruse on 24 November 1809 when he spotted Villacampa‘s *partida* in the vicinity of Orig ela.

> The colonel crossed Orig ela at the head of six companies, a gun and a howitzer. Taking position on a plateau, he opened fire with his artillery pieces. At the same time, regimental supplies withdrew in direction of Daroca, under the glow of bivouac fires he had lit. While the rear elements feigned a retreat, the six companies were infiltrating without rucksacks, or raincoats, with the orders not to open fire. They climbed by three columns on the steepest side. Arrived at the summit, they prepared for a hasty attack, waiting for a planned artillery signal. . . . The insurgents lost 500 men.[133]

French small units also adapted their environment by refining their techniques. 13th *Cuirassiers* and 4th *Hussards* improved their ability to react by reducing the number of bugle calls. Marcelle explained that flying columns were systematically screened by a *hussard* squad, while the rear –guard was fitted with mules, which carried up to ten days of supply. Such a disposition increased the units‘ operational reach and kept out the force from the population, which collected intelligence for the insurgents. If soldiers were wounded, they would follow the column, loaded on the mules. This last measure was critical for morale because isolated soldiers were systematically assassinated. Other techniques mentioned in reports and correspondences cannot be cross-checked but proved that common sense and judgment were applied to fulfill the mission. As an example, Major Parquin mentioned that sentries were emplaced in the church‘ bell tower prior to any settlement and warned the garrison of an insurgent approach by ringing the bells. Lieutenant Berthon observed that the 115th *régiment de ligne* probed the walls of the abandoned villages to recover food, weapons and ammunition, because insurgents walled

[133]Ibid., 69-70.

up caches. While foraging, his battalion was searching the ditches in the nearby fields. If rifles were found, the closest village was searched as insurgents hid their weapons where they worked in order to attack isolated detachments. Regarding techniques and procedures, the *Grande Armée* exploited opportunities to the full. But it was not the result of any commander‘s guidance. It was rather tactical decisions made on the spot by small unit leaders who adapted to their environment.

Organizational adjustment represented the last brick in the wall Suchet erected in Aragon. First, he deployed three battalions of mountain specialized infantry, manned with conscripts from French Pyrenean departments.[134] Suchet was well placed to raise these formations because he created the *Chasseurs de montagne* in 1799. Under the command of Colonel Lapeyrolerie, the *régiment de Chasseurs pyrénéens*, became an elite troop. They gained a reputation by chasing the guerrillas in North Aragon and Catalonia, and managed to secure the line of communication between the French border and Jacca.

Second, the use of constabulary forces, or *gendarmerie* units, allowed Suchet to integrate provost-marshals in the flying-columns. In areas where the delineation between combatants and non–combatants was tight, the *gendarmerie* provided expeditionary justice capabilities. At the same time, they afforded battle-hardened additional troops because enrollment in the *gendarmerie* required at least four military campaign‘s experience in line infantry. In Spain, the average experience in the army reached eight years for the non-commissioned officers, and seven years for the officers.[135] In Aragon,

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[134]Elting, *Swords Around a Throne*, 222.

[135]Gildas Lepetit, ―La manière la plus efficace de maintenir la tranquillité, la place de la gendarmerie impériale dans le dispositif français du nord de l‘Espagne (1810-1814)”[The most Efficient Way to Maintain Rest, Situation of the Imperial Gendarmerie

the *gendarmerie* squadrons also represented half of the French mounted troops. During the penury in November 1810, these units were the only one to have available horses. The advantage for Suchet was a double-issue. He could dedicate professional law-enforcement units to route-security missions. At the same time, he could temporarily use *gendarmerie* units to replace garrisoned infantry units, and reassign them to war fighting missions. He also incorporated them in mobile columns where they contributed to the neutralization of Cuco on 17 March 1810 in the vicinity of Elorio, and to the arrest of Ortíz and Ugarte between February and June 1811.[136]

In conclusion, operational control and organizational change were conducted by Suchet whereas his subordinates revealed their aggressiveness, cultural awareness and tactical adaptation. These accomplishments proved effective thanks to the quality of the officer corps in the Army of Aragon. As mentioned by Suchet, ~~"t~~his difficult war, which required reviewing details, had the advantage to form officers, and made them autonomous."[137]

Economic Development and Counterinsurgency

The settlement of safe operating bases, associated with flying columns and area security operations, acted as the military part of the Aragonese pacification model. Beside counter-guerrilla warfare, Suchet provided solutions to soften the occupation of a force

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in the French Disposition in Northern Spain], *Annales historiques de la Révolution française*, No. 348 (Avril-Juin 2007): 4.

[136]Ibid., 8.

[137]Suchet, *Mémoires*, 71.

used to live-off the country. He also figured out the way to invigorate local economy while leveraging the fiscal tool.

Marshal Suchet understood that III Corps could not conduct abusive foraging, or arbitrary confiscation. Such a sustainment system would alienate the population and get the French soldiers used to plundering. In Aragon, examples of local and spontaneous pilfering occurred but the only significant and documented pillages took place after the siege of Lérida, and during the seizure of Montserrat convent. Considering the habits of European armies at that time, and in comparison with other Spanish provinces occupied by French forces, the Army of Aragon was an example of discipline. As arrears were critical Suchet put the emphasis on the acquittal of his soldiers' pay. Jean Morvan, in his description of the Imperial soldier, outlined that "[the French recruit] was irregularly paid, . . . depending on the conquered people who accorded good or bad ransom."[138] III Corps was no exception and several regiments had not been paid since 1808. On 1 August 1810, all arrears were settled by the French *ministère des finances.* Suchet reconstituted the bakery and butchery sections which sustained III Corps, and organized food storages. He purchased cattle in France to provide his brigades with fresh meat, and to prevent drains on the plummeting Aragonese herds. Eventually, he bought in cash every Spanish requisition and forced some French officers to "reimburse their debts." Bergerot mentioned, in his biography of Suchet, that the commanding officer of the 16th *régiment de ligne* and the chief of staff of the 3rd Division were denied the right for

[138]Jean Morvan, *Le soldat impérial* [The Imperial Soldier] (Paris, France: Librairie Historique Fabrice Teissèdre, 1904), 67.

personal food requisition.[139] The status quo was bearable as long as French finance funded the war. But on 9 February 1810, an Imperial decree ordering ~~–to~~ feed the war by war" changed the situation.

> General Suchet, the emperor ordered me [General Louis Berthier] to make you know that you should tax the country, and impose extraordinary contributions if necessary, with a view to provide soldier's pay and sustain your corps, as it is no longer in France's power to defray these expenses. The enormous amount of money constantly sent to Spain by the Imperial treasury impoverishes France–the country you occupy has abundant resources must henceforth supply the needs of your troops.[140]

The accumulation of military and civilian powers in a single person would provide unity of effort and command. But the Army of Aragon had to collect taxes to ensure its own support. It was a dangerous challenge in an occupied and guerrilla-stricken country. To mitigate the decree's effects, Suchet decided to ensure a permanent flow of money in Aragon to support growth. He ordered the pay to be released every five days because ~~–s~~pending is usually close to the soldier's revenue." ~~–A~~s a result, the inhabitant was convinced, with no further delay, that the collected tax was an advance on one's salary that would be paid back while supplying our cities and training camps."[141]

He made the inventory of every Spanish manufactures and farms able to sustain the *Grande Armée* with clothes, food and horse equipment. He immediately submitted orders and payed them in cash. He also ensured the continuity of pensions granted by the old regime to gain the favors of the notables. These measures helped but the

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[139]Bergerot, *Le Maréchal Suchet*, 67.

[140]Extract from the Imperial decree addressed to Marshall Suchet in February 1810, cited in Suchet, *Mémoires*, 281.

[141]Ibid., 301.

implementation of an enduring and generous policy required a deep reorganization of the provincial finance. The choice was to conduct an aggressive fiscal policy. To do so, Suchet decided to optimize preexisting structures, empowering the *contaduría* and making it responsible for the tax base.

> The old *contadoria* [sic] was a kind of office of accounts, and justly enjoyed the confidence of the inhabitants. It was however divided in such a manner that each administrator had his separate accountant. With a view to concentrate the mode of superintendence, and simplify the machinery of that useful establishment, all the private accountants were united under the direction of the accountant of the province, and this functionary, in virtue of fresh power, was invested with the right of deciding upon very difficult question, of investigating the abuses which might obstruct the progress of the collection of the revenue, and of securing a more effectual assessment of the public burdens. Monopoly, which exercises an arbitrary control over the wants or tastes of the people at large, and checks the natural tendency of commerce to satisfy them, had secured to itself every channel of public consumption and closed all the avenues to industry.[142]

Suchet simplified the revenue collection by abolishing privileges, punishing abuses, ensuring transparency and centralizing the incomes and expenses. Suchet‘s first reform was to eliminate the state monopoly over peculiar trading goods. He cancelled regional exemptions to make the contribution equal for every municipality. The tax collection was allowed in silver, gold, bank money, grain, or leather to facilitate the taxpayer‘s acquittal. Suchet granted significant tax-relief to the fastest contributing communes. To prevent any misappropriation of public funds, the new mode of tax collection was officially posted in every city. Resistance to non-official taxes was even encouraged by the French backed administration. Spanish *corregidores* collected the taxes in fully controlled territories, and French tax-collectors accompanied flying columns in non-occupied areas. –As the first three months of the occupation had not

[142]Suchet, *Mémoires*, 292.

provided the treasury with more than one million and five hundred thousand *francs*, the following nine months generated more than twenty-five million *francs*."[143] The rapidity Suchet managed to recover the war tax let him free to lower the fiscal pressure on Aragon while sending three million *francs* to Madrid. In his acerbic analysis of Aragon's French administration, Alexander recognized that ~~–~~Suchet's achievements were laudable in that his government was the only one in Spain which had increased its revenue collection in 1811 over 1810."[144]

As fiscal freedom of action was obtained, support to economic development was the next project. But the 1809 regional economic situation was gloomy. The one year-long war ravaged the agriculture and the bloody siege of Saragossa decimated the populace. Suchet depicted in his memoirs the province when he arrived in Aragon.

> Torn, for almost two years by the requisitions of several national and foreign armies, this land has been exhausted; agriculture was suffering: vineyards were destroyed; enormous consumption had almost consumed sheep farming. In the whole province, one single tissue factory could hardly be found in Albaracin; weaving looms were scarce; one tannery remained; but the pair of shoes came to nine francs.[145]

To remedy this poor situation, III Corps commander created manufactures of biscuits in Baroca, Alcañiz, Huesca. He erected a fabric of saltpeter in Saragossa, and a gunpowder factory in Villafeliche providing support to the army and employment to locals. He designated the Spanish administration as the monitoring agency for wine supply. Another part of the economic revival consisted in a development plan. He

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[143]Reynaud, *Contre-guérilla en Espagne*, 151.

[144]Alexander, *Rod of Iron: French Counterinsurgency Policy in Aragon during the Peninsular War*, 102.

[145]Suchet, *Mémoires*, 51.

conducted the construction of the road between Jaca and Oloron to ensure the flow of supplies from French depots and facilitate Spanish exportations. The Imperial canal, whose locks and dikes were destroyed, was restored thanks to the indigenous workforce. The issue was double-fold: on the one hand, the canal was critical for irrigation. On the other hand, the waterway constituted a major trade axis and a source of revenues by taxing civilian navigation. Eventually, the Duke of Albuféra undertook building work in the public interest. As an example, he built drinking fountains in Saragossa, restored the hospitals in Huesca and Teruel. He also settled new squares and open spaces in Valencia, like plaza Aduana.

Administration Management and Counterinsurgency

As a corollary of economic development, the buildup of a robust administration was a key element for pacification. It was in essence an inter-agency body capable to merge and synchronize lines of operation as diverse as security, governance, rule of law, and reconstruction. If Suchet became governor of Aragon on 9 February 1810, he was also a military commander who needed to sustain his army. As a result, he had to avoid the exhaustion of local resources through a balanced administration. It was also the most significant way to build trust with the population while giving a Spanish face to the Imperial occupation system. Suchet's proclamation to the Aragonese inhabitants after the fall of María and Belchite outlined this mindset. "My troops will neither prevent harvests, nor congest your cities, but they will live in the fields, ready to protect you. . . . The army

supplies will be equally supported. . . . A representative of every district will join a committee . . . responsible for a fair distribution of charges."[146]

But the ―Spaniards first" policy was hindered by the lack of skilled and available locals. Between 1809 and 1810, the population of Aragon decreased by 60,000 and the war evicted landowners and notables. Consequently, ―enlightened" and Spanish cadres failed to staff the disrupted bureaucracy. However a respectful behavior towards the Church, and sympathy expressed to the Bourbon established order ensured the cooperation of some Spanish power-brokers. Father Santander, vice-archbishop of Saragossa would be the first to support Suchet's administration. ―Following his advice, I [Suchet] replaced every vacant post by those who proved to be attached to order and French people. All were appointed by me and put under the authority of this remarkable clergyman."[147]

Suchet would be cautious, assigning respected Spanish notables to major positions. Don Mariano Domínguez, General Palafox' former military quartermaster, participated in Saragossa's defense. He was an expert in Aragon's resources and appointed as director of the police and president of the ―tribunal for insurgent penalties." At the head of the provincial court system, or *Audiencia*, former judge Villa y Torres was maintained as for the president of the tax services. Eventually, the *Afrancesado* Larreguy was chosen to serve as secretary general of the Aragon government. ―Thanks to the advice of these men, the governor acquired the favors of the public opinion. Aware of the

[146]S.H.A.T, Proclamation aux habitants de l'Aragon [Proclamation to the people of Aragon], 19 Juin 1809 [19 June 1809], C8.29 cited in Reynaud, *Contre-guérilla en Espagne*, 133.

[147]Suchet, *Mémoires*, 189.

country's situation, they accepted the honorable mission to interpose moderation and justice between the inhabitants and the soldiers."[148]

In March 1810, Suchet refused to enroll non-Aragonese civil servants in his administration. Guided by his cultural understanding, he was cautious to adapt to a region proud of its particularism, and prompt to reject Madrid's functionaries.

Beside this junta-like government which acted as an advisory council for political and judicial matters, Suchet relied on the hierarchy of French tax collectors, who juxtaposed with the civilian administration of the *corregidores* and *alcaldes*.[149] Thanks to this organization, the fiscal system, instrumental to pay the war contributions, was tightly controlled. At the same time, the implementation of local rules and Spanish fiscal and public law avoided the time-consuming learning of French law.

The land registry was updated and the kingdom of Aragon, including Catalonia, was divided into fourteen administrative regions. The last specific administrative adjustment put the emphasis on the *Acequieros*, the court in charge of irrigation, whose disputes were critical in a water-deprived area. In a nutshell, the old regime administrative equilibrium was preserved but its structure was centralized and simplified to ensure transparency and facilitate tax collection. William Napier witnessed the results and summarized them in his recollection.

> He called the notables and heads of the clergy in Aragon to his headquarters, and with their advice reorganized his internal administration. He removed many absurd restrictions upon industry and trade, placed the municipal power and police entirely with the natives, and thus obtained greater supplies with less

[148]Ibid., 296.

[149]The *corregidores* controlled civilian expenses, customs, tax base and tax collection at the country town level whereas the *alcalde* was a sort of mayor.

> discontent. And he was well served and obeyed, both in matters of administration and police, by the Aragonese, whose feeling was careful to soothe, showing himself in all things a shrewd governor and an able commander.[150]

Furthermore, the customs were fully restructured and built on the French model. The customs corps was manned with former Spanish soldiers and officers and put under the supervision of squadrons of *gendarmerie*.[151] The boundaries of territorial districts were remodeled to ensure the rapid dissemination of governmental guidance. As an example, Aragon former districts were merged and then divided along the Ebro River. Each bank was under control of a high commissary, who enforced a better accountability.

In the light from the above, Suchet was astute enough to perceive that a native bureaucracy, supervised by imperial specialists would persuade more easily the Aragonese to obey the French directives. Indigenous notables, like Mariano Dominguez or Santander were effective relays, and a clever clerical policy engendered a bandwagoning phenomenon. As the Spanish leadership was settled, Suchet remodeled the administration while preserving the basis of its structure. The result was a viable and efficient administration which fulfilled the occupation‘s objectives. In fact, counterinsurgency and administration were intertwined as the tax collection was an indicator of the degree of pacification. Four years later, Napier, the British chronicler, judged the French bureaucratic achievements: ―Suchet‘s civilian administration was

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[150]Napier, *History of the War in the Peninsula and the South of France, from the year 1807 to the year 1814*, 825.

[151]The *gendarmerie* was a constabulary force in uniform. Its model is still used today in France.

perfectly harmonized with the way he conducted his army, it was vigorous and as shrewd as cautious."[152]

Conclusion

Civilian background and previous military assignments prepared Marshall Suchet to the challenges of counterinsurgency. Facing critical operational limitations in a rugged and hostile terrain, he understood social dynamics, and leveraged local intelligentsia, as well as the strong Aragonese regionalism. Assuming that building an effective army was the condition to conduct further military operations, Suchet developed his command on three principles:"First, discipline was the foundation of a strong army. Second, discipline depended on good administration. And last, officers must display integrity."[153]

At the operational level, Suchet's main achievement was his ability to successfully transition from conventional to unconventional operations. Recognizing favorable circumstances to commit resources to counter-guerrilla warfare, he gained freedom of action and empowered his subordinates. At the tactical level, he systematized battalion-level flying columns, and manned them with selected troops and cadres. Favoring decentralized actions, he largely benefited from flexible small-unit leaders who exploited opportunities at full, while adapting to their operational environment. Eventually, he reorganized III Corps by integrating constabulary forces, and mountain-specialized units in the task-organization.

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[152]William Napier, *Histoire de la guerre de la Péninsule*, Tome VII (Paris, France, 1837).

[153]Jean Ojala, ~~–~~Suchet," *Napoleon's Marshals* (New York, NY: Stein and Day, 1962), 489.

From an economic point of view, Suchet mitigated as much as possible the effects of the imperial decree forcing him to live-off the country. He reformed his soldiers‘ pay-roll to support a constant flow of money in Aragon, and rationalized the provincial finance. Respecting the native institutions, he simplified the tax-base through the abolition of privileges, supported the transparency of tax-collection, and centralized the incomes and expenses. He developed trade through the construction of roads between Spain and France, and the restoration of the imperial canal.

From an administrative point of view, Suchet was cautious to avoid the exhaustion of local revenues. Relying on an advisory council of Spanish power-brokers, he juxtaposed French emissaries to the indigenous structure. He also updated the land registry, and remodeled the boundaries of the territorial districts to facilitate their governance.

In the end, Suchet‘s success was directly linked with an unprecedented degree of civil-military integration, which backed a viable and committed native bureaucracy. Understanding the limits of military capabilities in the pacification process, he thought ―out of the box,” while adapting non-military means to his end: destroy the insurgency, sustain his army, and set the conditions to defeat the Spanish-British coalition in northern Spain.

CHAPTER 4

SOULT VS THE HYDRA

> In the kind of war we are facing, and against the adversaries we are fighting, it is critical . . . that leaders should be impassible and have enough fortitude to face the worst events with serenity.
>
> — Nicolas Soult, *Marshal Soult's letter to Joseph Bonaparte*

Considered by Napoleon as the best tactician in Europe, and benefiting from a strong experience as a division and corps commander, Marshall Nicolas Soult participated in the campaign of Portugal, then conquered Andalusia. From a military point of view, he polarized his province between counter-guerrilla areas, and controlled areas, while shifting from a terror policy to a conciliatory policy. Examining solutions other than military, he also adopted a carrot and stick approach while using the Spanish court-system, and tax collection as a punitive tool. Eventually, he indirectly bolstered the Andalusian economy by supporting armament industry and increasing the exploitation of natural resources to sustain his army.

Marshall Soult's Personal Background

Soult took part in the major Napoleonic campaigns as a division commander. If his ascent was faster than Suchet, his results contrasted to Suchet in Spain, where he initially suffered a series of defeats against the coalition forces. But he also conducted a successful counterinsurgency as the governor of Andalusia. In 1808, this province was a major center of the Spanish rebellion. And the population proved ruthless to the defeated French army in Baylen. In spite a more favorable situation than the Northern provinces,

the Spring of 1810 witnessed the Andalusia's submission, and a cheerful reception of Joseph. Was this a paradox born from Soult's policy?

On 29 March 1769, Nicolas-Jean-de-Dieu Soult was born the son of a notary in Saint-Amand, Department of Tarn. He lived in a modest family, and displayed no taste for studies. At the age of 16, young Soult enrolled as a volunteer in the regiment of the *Royal-Infanterie*. When the revolution broke out, he distinguished himself in the service of the republic and went up from sergeant to second-lieutenant. Commissioned as an officer in the grenadiers, he was tasked to train the 1st *Bataillon du Haut-Rhin*.[154] In 1792, Soult was promoted captain and commanded his company during the battles of Oberfeslheim, Kaiserslautern and Wissembourg against the Austrians. In 1794, he served as Marshal François Joseph Lefebvre's chief of staff. He fought as a regimental commander during the decisive battle of Fleurus which precipitated the anti-French coalition's withdrawal from Belgium. Promoted brigadier general the same year, he was at the battles of Altenkirchen, Lahn and Friedberg. In 1798, he saved the Army of the Rhine from defeat by charging with 6,000 French soldiers against the 25,000 strong army of the Archduke Charles at Ostrach. He became major general the next month and participated to the Switzerland campaign under Masséna. At the battle of Zurich, Soult prevented the junction between the Russians and the Austrians in an audacious maneuver.

> Soult organized a company of a hundred and fifty swimmers, who, with their sabers in their teeth, and holding their muskets in one hand over their heads, dashed into the river at midnight. . . . They here made a stand till some grenadiers

[154]Alexandre Sallé, *Vie politique du Maréchal Soult* [Marshal Soult's Political Life] (Paris, France: Champion Editeur, 1834), 5.

could be got over, and then attacked the camp of the enemy, putting it to rout and taking 4,000 men.[155]

In the Army of Italy, Soult was remarked for his intrepidity and physical bravery during the defense of Genoa. Made prisoner by the Austrians, he was repatriated, then made commander-in-chief in the *Piémont* where he fought the *barbets*. Appointed as Colonel-General in the Consular Guard, he was given command of the camp of Saint-Omer (1803 to 1805). In 1804, he was made marshal and put at the head of IV Corps in Austria. Commanding the right wing in Austerlitz and Jena, he earned the reputation being ~~"t~~he best tactician in Europe." After the battles of Eylau and Friedland, he amassed wealth and titles, and became Duke of Dalmatia in 1808. For the next six years, Soult was engaged in Spain where he faced obstinate fighting and few laurels. In company of Napoleon, he pursued Sir John Moore to Corunna where he was defeated. Tasked to invade Portugal, he assaulted Oporto at great cost and was routed by Wellesley in May 1809. The later success against the Spaniards in Ocana justified the emperor's confidence in him. During the spring of 1809, Soult and his II Corps joined Marshal Michel Ney's troops to pacify Galicia. To put an end to their rivalries, Napoleon finally appointed him a major general of the French Army, and gave him the command of II, V and VI Corps.

In 1810, he conquered Andalusia, seizing the cities of Seville and Badajoz, but did not join Massena's troops in the invasion of Portugal. During two years, Soult occupied southern Spain, assumed her governship, and conducted regular as well as irregular warfare.

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[155]Joel Tyler Headley, *Napoleon and His Marshals* (New York, NY: Baker and Schribner, 1846), 296.

When he finally settled in his Seville palace, was he well prepared to face this challenge? It is true that he had no civilian experience as he had embraced the profession of arms since his adolescence. But from a tactical point of view, he had constantly fought in Europe and proved very effective as a division and corps commander. In the *Piémont*, he was also used to irregular warfare which he practiced successfully against the *barbets*. He was accustomed to the mechanisms of bureaucracy and exerted his organizational leadership as a camp commander. In his memoirs, Colonel de Saint-Chamans, Soult's aide, described more precisely the commander's psychology.[156] He did not hide Soult's excessive ambition and great avarice, but he also pinpointed his intellectual abilities, his analytical way of thinking, and his calmness in combat. His position as a marshal provided him with a clear overview of the political dynamics between Paris and Madrid, which proved critical to extract a vision from military strategic guidance. French critical historiography depicted Soult as a cupid satrap. This reputation was fueled by the other French generals with whom he maintained enduring rivalries. His political turn-abouts after the fall of Napoleon also explained this situation. But Nicole Gotteri's biography gave another sense of Soult's talents. "He [Napoleon] contented himself to dictate orders in purely military terms, whereas the Marshal [Soult] interpreted them in terms of pacification, convinced that his own duty was to preserve the province of Andalusia, whose strategic position was not in question."[157]

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[156]Alfred Armand Robert de Saint-Chamans, *Mémoires du général de Saint-Chamans* [General De Saint-Chamans' Memoirs] (Paris, France: Librairie Plon, 1896).

[157]Nicole Gotteri, *Soult, Maréchal d'Empire et homme d'Etat* [Soult, Marshal of the Empire and Statesman] (Besançon, France: Editions de la Manufacture, 1991), 344.

In the end, his career was not as diverse as Suchet's former background, but his personal connections with the Emperor, his enduring experience at the operational level, and his knowledge of the Spanish theater gave him the perspective to conduct counterinsurgency.

The Province of Andalusia

In southern Spain, Andalusia was an inverted triangle bordering the Mediterranean Sea. Its summit was Cadiz whereas its base was a line passing through Badajoz and Murcia. Covering an area of 720,000 square miles, the region was crossed by the Guadalquivir River which flowed to the Atlantic Ocean from north-east to south-west. This basin was a fertile plain, restricted to the North by the Sierra Morena mountains. To the south, the large valley was overlooked by the Sierra de Ronda and Sierra Nevada. As a consequence, north to south lines of communication were poor, especially because the Sierra de Ronda hindered any movement between Madrid and Badajoz. The east-west connections between the Guadalquivir and Guadiana valleys offered easy communications but were jeopardized by the ongoing hostilities with Portugal. The large maritime front, associated with the British occupied harbors of Cadiz and Gibraltar, offered dangerous alternatives for the anti-French coalition.

The province was the combination of the medieval kingdoms of Seville, Cordoba, Jaen, and Grenada, split into six prefectures during the French occupation. Mention should be made that Soult's area of operation also encompassed the southern regions of Estremadura and La Mancha.[158]

[158]Jean-Marc Lafon, *L'Andalousie et Napoléon* (Paris, France: Nouveau Monde, 2007), 36.

Since the 16th Century, the French vision of Andalusia was built on idealistic clichés, described by the British writer Henry Swinburne in his 1799 novel, *Travel through Spain*. Depicted as a luxurious province of fruit trees, tempered by a mild climate, Andalusia was a tempting target for the *Grande Armée*. The words used by Soult in a letter sent to Napoleon were symptomatic of the French mentality who usually considered Andalusia as an Eden. "There is no richer land in the world . . . your majesty's government will rejuvenate in a few years this beautiful country where every seeds extracted from America may be cultivated. No colony affords so many advantages."[159]

This naïve description was certainly backed by ulterior motives, but it embodied the mindset of soldiers who made easy comparisons and were more familiar to the rugged lands of Navarre or Biscay. Rocca's recollections confirmed this impression. "Andalusia is certainly the most fertile Spanish region. There is a proverb from Castile and La Mancha, which affirms that the Guadalquivir waters fatten up the horses more than barley from other countries."[160] It is true that the region presented an undeniable agricultural potential. However, Andalusia was solely taken into account in the imperial calculus. Jean-Marc Lafon, French specialist of the peninsular war and field expert of Andalusia, studied the emperor's correspondence between January 1810 and September 1812. The results of his research revealed that northern Spain was perceived as the only profitable region. Andalusia's development and annexation were briefly envisioned at the beginning

[159]Lettre du Maréchal Soult à Napoléon [Letter from Marshal Soult to Napoleon], cited by Bergerot, *Le Maréchal Suchet*, 221.

[160]Rocca, *Mémoires sur la guerre des Français en Espagne*, 160.

of 1811, but the enduring British pressure and the preparation for the Russian campaign aborted further planning.

From a sociological point of view, the large size of Andalusia implied a mosaic of regionalisms which fueled isolationist reactions. The insurgent movement, mostly based in the mountains, was intertwined with autarkic communities which could not envision a horizon beyond their bell tower. William Jacob, a British merchant and scientist, collected his observations during his travel in Spain from 1809 to 1810, and observed the "~~c~~ompartmentalized patriotism" of Andalusia. "~~T~~he narrow views of this individual are, I am persuaded, comfortable to those of most the inhabitants; they feel the fate of their own town or province, but not for the fate of Spain: they invent plans, and organize troops, for the protection of their immediate district, while the general defence of the country is neglected."[161]

In addition, contemporaries found in Andalusia a Spanish land far different from the others. First, all outlined how the population was half-bred with Moorish traits and culture, instrumental to generate a unique regional identity. Second, they systematically considered Andalusia as a civilization, refined by maritime trade and abundant agricultural resources, which contrasted with a poorly developed Spain. General Louis de Bouillé, IV Corps chief of staff, was struck with the refinements of Andalusian society, "~~a~~fter crossing Spain to reach Malaga, one believes to be back in [modern] Europe."[162] A

[161]William Jacob, *Travels in the South of Spain in Letters written A.D 1809 and 1810* (London: Johnson and Co, 1811), 346-347.

[162]Louis Joseph de Bouillé (général), *Souvenirs et fragments pour servir aux mémoires de ma vie et de mon temps* [Memories and Abstracts to Serve the Memoirs of my Life and my Time] (Paris, France: Picard, 1911), 317.

lesser will to fight was the direct outcome of a rich province. Captain Lapène, French artillery officer attached to 2nd division, V Corps, especially linked Andalusia's prosperity with the lack of fighting spirit of her inhabitants. "The ease of obtaining from the land diverse and abundant crops, keeps the people from Andalusia in a natural state of calmness, and set worse conditions for battle fatigues, than the one settled in Catalonia, Biscay and Aragon."[163]

Besides geographical features, what does it spell in terms of operational variables? First, the province constituted a huge area even three corps could not cover. The extended lines of communications contributed to the French dispersion. The region was compounded by its remoteness from France and its lack of connectivity with the major supply route between Bayonne and Burgos. Second, the Cadiz ulcer constantly drained besieging forces during the entire occupation of Andalusia.[164] The proximity with Portugal, and seaside vulnerability to British landings were incremental and enduring threats.

But Andalusia also offered some advantages. Large open-fields dominated the most useful area of Guadalquivir valley and allowed the maximum use of artillery and cavalry. The quality of the east-west road network between Seville and Murcia allowed

[163]Edouard Lapène, *Conquête de l'Andalousie, campagne de 1810 et 1811 dans le midi de l'Espagne* [Conquest of Andalusia, 1810-1811 Campaign in Southern Spain] (Paris, France: Anselin et Pochard, 1823), 23.

[164]The siege of Cadiz (February 1810 to August 1812) was the longest of the many sieges that punctuated the Peninsular War. Lasting for two and a half years, the defense of Cadiz prevented the French from completing their conquest of Andalusia at the start of 1810, pinned down a large part of Marshal Soult's Army of Andalusia (there were rarely less than 20,000 French troops around the city), and gave the Spanish and their British allies an ideal base for amphibious operations along the south coast of Spain.

rapid operational transfer of forces. The economy offered great opportunities for development, whose exportations could be supported by maritime outlets. Eventually, the regional diversity implied a lack of cohesiveness and aggressiveness favorable for a pacification policy.

The Military Instrument of Power in Counter-Guerrilla Warfare

During spring 1810, the French conquered in a few days the largest part of Andalusia, at the end of an unexpected ―military promenade." The general amnesty announced by Joseph had no significant results, and the negotiations with the exiled Cadiz government remained fruitless. During this period, two types of rebellion developed but had in common the limited scope of their impact. First, La Peza's upheaval on 15 April 1810 exemplified spontaneous reactions to the Imperial requisitions. They were violent and popular events but rare episodes during the 1810-1812 occupation. Second, Andalusian *partidas* were well organized by Spanish officers, but were localized in small areas, and did no conduct large-scale operations. In an article on the Napoleonic rule of law during the Peninsular War, Jean-Marc Lafon mentioned Díaz Torrejón's studies on the Andalusian insurgency. The province harbored three main insurgent safe havens: Captain Hermenegildo Bielsa's *partida* in Segura (Jaén prefecture), Brigadier General Antonio Osorio Calvache in the Alpujarras (Grenada prefecture) and Brigadier General Francisco González Peinado in the Sierra de Ronda (Jerez prefecture).[165] In

[165]Jean-Marc Lafon. Justices d'exception napoléoniennes, militaire et civile, dans l'Espagne occupée: l'exemple de l'Andalousie (1810-1812) [Napoleonic Extraordinary Laws, Military and Civilian Courts in Occupied Spain, The Example of Andalusia (1810-1812)] *Crime, Histoire et Sociétés* 13, no.2 (2009): 70.

comparison to Aragon, the military equation was characterized by a highly organized but much more localized insurgency. Salmón, Toreno, and Horta Rodríguez are three major Spanish historians who studied the insurgency. For Andalusia, the cross-checking of their sources demonstrated that only thirteen percent of the *partidas* operated on several prefectures.[166] The lack of mobility and the isolationism of the areas where they were active shaped an original insurgent configuration.

At the operational level, Soult made the decision to concentrate his efforts on urban areas. He clearly made the difference between ~~–u~~seful areas" where non-lethal actions were conducted, and ~~–c~~ounter-guerrilla areas" where heavy-handed military operations were implemented. This regional discriminating vision allowed him to avoid the dispersion of his units, to carry on a ~~–c~~arrot and stick" approach, and to prevent contagion. In the ~~–u~~seful Andalusia," Soult garrisoned his troops in the richest cities of Seville, Cordoba, Granada and Malaga, where the French high visibility could influence the liberal opinion, and support the *afrancesados* and j*uramentos* administration.[167] Soult prohibited the widely applied ~~–b~~lock-houses" policy to avoid dispersion.[168] Considering the Guadalquivir plains, he assumed that the open-field, the quality of the road network and the low level of insecurity let him free to prevent burgeoning outposts. On the

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[166]Lafon, *L'Andalousie et Napoléon*, 395.

[167]*Afrancesados*, or ~~–t~~urned-French," was the name used to qualify Portuguese and Spanish partisans of the French Revolution and liberalism. *Juramentos*, was employed to denote Spanish locals who served in the French Imperial administration.

[168]Block-house was the term designating the French outposts built along the supply routes. French Lieutenant-colonel Le Mière de Corvoy outlined in his memoirs that they mobilized much of the troops and contributed to reduce the available pool of forces in Northern Spain.

contrary, he dedicated few units to area security missions, and settled temporary lines of defense. To support this vision, Soult organized a massive deforestation campaign to eradicate ―green areas" favorable for ambushes. In a decree on 14 November 1810, he ordered every tree within a rifle range from the main roads cut down.

In the counter-guerrilla areas, mainly limited to the Sierra de Ronda and Sierra Nevada mountains, Soult favored encircling positional defense, aiming at isolating the hot spots. Far from the conciliatory policy conducted in Malaga or Seville, Soult implemented terror to polarize his area of operations. The formulation of this method was clearly expressed in his decree of 10 May 1810. He presented his program to Marshal Berthier, Napoleon's chief of staff, in these terms, ―From now on, we should only have friends or enemies in Spain, the careless or neutral ones are dangerous; we need to force them to serve their legitimate sovereign or to come down against him, then we will fight them and they will suffer the fate of defeat."[169] Basically, Soult's idea was to overcome the blur distinction between combatants and non-combatants by radicalizing the hard-liners and subduing the irresolute Spaniards.

Marshal Soult wanted to ―keep the enemies imprisoned in the mountains," and to asphyxiate the safe havens by cutting the insurgent supplies. The decree of 25 May 1810 even declared the blockade of the insurgent areas, controlling every movement of people and confiscating ―in and out" supplies. This approach was so successful that Domingo Dueños y Castro, representative of the Serrania de Ronda community, led a delegation to

[169]S.H.A.T, Lettre du Maréchal Soult datée du 17 avril 1810 [Marshal Soult's letter from 17 April 1810] cited in Lafon, *L'Andalousie et Napoléon*, 379.

Cadiz on 27 July 1811, and requested a military intervention to lower the pressure.[170] Population control measures were also implemented by the establishment of ~~"s~~afety cards" which were compulsory for any travel. In his guidance from 15 May 1810, Soult ordered their distribution to the population. This card was delivered by every district which registered them in a controlled inventory. The distribution was prohibited to the disbanded soldiers, to drifters and foreigners.

From a tactical point of view, Soult mastered the use of flying columns during the campaign of Italy and issued precise directives to empower his subordinates. He systematically provided his mobile columns with mountain artillery assets. Light howitzers with demountable carriage were especially produced by the Seville foundry. Considering the good results of this innovation, Soult even recommended to Berthier its generalization in Spain. In the decree of 23 May 1810, he also restricted the use of mules, riding horses and draft horses to Joseph's partisans, and to the owners whose revenues equaled at least 5,000 *reales*. As these social categories were considered reliable, the aim was to reduce the mobility of the insurgents while improving the transportation capabilities of his units.

The objective of the mobile columns was to bring terror in the safe havens and to influence the population by punitive actions. In December 1810, the column led by Colonel Rémond in the Sierra de Ronda engaged Manuel Jiménez Guazo's network. Several monks were shot down and the monastery of Las Nieves was burnt to the ground. On 28 April 1810, General Mansin's column departed from Sevilla, and burnt the villages of Montellano, Algodonales, Cortés, Atajate, and Gauen. The cross-checking of

[170]Lafon, *L'Andalousie et Napoléon*, 387.

the commander‘s report and testimonies of officers from the 40th and 103rd *régiments de ligne* confirmed the brutality and the indiscriminate violence.[171]

The impact on French morale was significant, and the risk of radicalization from the population was high. But the contagion never came out of the counter-guerrilla areas. The destruction of the basin of recruitment resulted in the decapitation of the Andalusia insurgency. Lafon‘s statistical studies on the panel of seventy-five *partidas*, listed by Spanish historians in the region, demonstrated the efficiency of these actions. From 1810 to 1812, they resulted in the destruction of thirty percent of the rebel networks, and the submission of ten percent of the insurgents. Success was derived from Soult‘s directives which advocated the use of Spanish partisan units in combination with flying columns, so that ―Fifty French suffice to support one hundred Spaniards and several mobile columns of one hundred and fifty soldiers who constantly patrol the country produce the same effect than more considerable troops deployed in their quarters.”[172]

But was this policy a reality? Jean-Marc Lafon compared two inventories of Spanish auxiliaries in the French army during the Peninsular War. In November 1811, General Honoré Gazan‘s memorandum to King Joseph reported 44,292 Spanish soldiers in Soult‘s army. This figure was unrealistic and supported political goals while showing progress to Madrid. The inquiry of Gonzalo O´Farrill y Herrera, Joseph‘s Minister of war, consolidated the number of 4,378 Spanish soldiers. Even if this option overestimated

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[171]Pierre Ballue, *Les Mémoires du capitaine Pierre Ballue* [Captain Pierre Ballue‘s Memoirs] (Angers, France: Bulletin de la société archéologique de Touraine, 1963), 357-365.

[172]Letter from Marshal Soult to General Sébastiani on 7 May 1810 cited in Lafon, *L’Andalousie et Napoléon*, 286

the real figures, the number of 3,000 local auxiliaries would still constitute a clear support to the French forces. The systematic testimony made by French junior officers' like Rocca, Lapène, Saint-Chamans or Clermont-Tonnerre also confirmed that the use of auxiliary forces was not unique. In comparison with the symbolic Joseph's Spanish forces, the success of local enrollment was undeniable and certainly instrumental to explain Soult's results.

In conclusion, Soult expressed his operational art through a balanced use of resources between seized and controlled areas. Consequently, he applied a selective approach which maximized regional isolationism, local "focoism" and urban submission.[173] At tactical level, he conducted a terror policy in unrestricted counter-guerrilla areas, where he used flying columns backed by indigenous forces, positional defense and population control measures.

The Administrative Tool of Pacification

To quote William Napier in his *History of the War in the Peninsula*, "The Duke of Dalmatia [Soult], while contributing to the final subjugation of Spain, was also well assured that, in fixing a solid foundation for future military operations, he should obtain reputation as an able administrator and pacificator of a conquered country."[174]

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[173]The analogy with Che Guevara's concept was inspired by the fact that the *partidas* were rural movements which used violence as a pre requisite for social transformation. In accordance with "focoism", guerrilla warfare was primarily implemented to get the attention of the population, and to fuel the revolutionary feeling.

[174]Napier, *History of the War in the Peninsula and in the South of France*, vol. II, 120.

The ostentation of the Seville court and Soult's personal enrichment usually eclipsed his achievement as a governor of Andalusia. But taking advantage of a compliant social environment, he managed to settle his expectations by convincing the population to support the imperial bureaucracy.

The cosmopolitan identity of the region fixed non-indigenous populations which were easier to influence. Seville, Cadiz and Granada had trade monopoly with the Carrera of Indias and were powerful commercial magnets. On the 25,761 foreigners registered in 1791 on the Spanish Coast, 5,778 were French.[175] In addition, a significant part of the business in Seville was held by Basque people. For example, the most powerful industrialist in Malaga was Manuel Agustín Heredia, a Basque landowner from Logroño. *Indianos*, sensible to the enlightenment, were also an influential part of the immigrants. They were the second generation of Spaniards born in America and they returned in the homeland for official or economic purposes. As a result, many functionaries in Andalusia came from Cuba, Mexico or Argentina. The steward of Andalusia, Pablo de Olivade, was even born in Lima.[176] This foreign colonization, triggered by commercial exchange, offered a French permissive environment for idealistic or economic reasons.

Modeling the administrative approach on his military methodology, Soult used a carrot and stick policy. He did it by playing with the conformism characterizing the elites in Seville and Malaga. Many French officers like Lapène, Bouillé or Espinchal outlined

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[175]Didier Ozanam, Le recensement des étrangers en 1791; une source pour l'histoire des colonies étrangères en Espagne [Survey on the foreigners in 1791, a source for the history of foreign colonies in Spain], 220-226 cited in Lafon. *L'Andalousie et Napoléon*, 310.

[176]Ibid., 311.

the submission of the Andalusia urban intelligentsia, especially their fear of anarchy and civil war.[177] In Malaga and Granada, Soult also leveraged a fraction of the high clergy and the business community who was sensible to liberalism.[178] He benefited from the collaboration of the local civil servants who mainly stayed in place because of economic opportunism, and because the administration structure was untouched by the war since 1808. At the same time, he organized tax-relief for the notables of Lower Andalusia, and interested the *juramentos* with a percentage of the tax collection. Eventually the French army offered a better alternative in a region where insurgency and criminality were tightly linked.

Soult did not reform the Andalusia administration, but he rationalized it in accordance with his personal agenda. He managed to bypass Joseph' administration by replacing the royal supporters by trusted men. Leandro de Solís, prefect of Seville, Badía y Leblich, steward of Cordoba, and Antonio José Cortés, president of the criminal junta in Jerez, were the first to undergo Soult's purges. Second, he turned tax-system and court-system into counterinsurgency tools dedicated to his policy. In the decree of 25 May 1810, Soult ordered the taxation of the villages which refused to build-up ~~–e~~ivic militias" and had been ~~–s~~tolen" by the insurgents. The fine equaled three times the amount of stolen supplies.[179] This measure complemented the military blockade

[177]Bouillé, *Souvenirs et fragments pour servir aux mémoires de ma vie et de mon temps*, 301-303.

[178]Lafon. *Justices d'exception napoléoniennes, militaire et civile, dans l'Espagne occupée: l'exemple de l'Andalousie (1810-1812)*, 70.

[179]Lafon, *L'Andalousie et Napoléon*, 387.

organized in Sierra de Ronda. It was also an example of the fiscal arsenal used to punish the passive complicity.

The Spanish judicial system was brought to heel in 1810. The French military chain of command strictly controlled the Andalusia court-system, but usually implemented indigenous jurisdictions to reinforce the legitimacy of the sentences. As an example, French General Sébastiani gave to the Granada criminal junta the responsibility to judge Vincente Moreno, an insurgent leader.[180]

At the same time, extraordinary military courts were implemented. They were mobile teams which gave Soult's subordinates the opportunity of rapid and in situ judgments. Whatever the procedure, Soult based his judicial policy on two major pillars. The first one was the psychological exploitation of the sentence. The enemy motivations and rationales were systematically discredited and assimilated to smuggling and pillage. Counter-propaganda narratives were consolidated by the blur distinction between highway-men and insurgents. Díaz Torrejón who drew a taxonomy of the insurgency even used the term of *guerrilleros de doble faz* [double face insurgents] to characterize the ambivalence of the national resistance.[181] The second principle was the network's decapitation. Every *cabecilla* was sentenced in official trials thoroughly covered by an intense press campaign. The aim was to destabilize the insurgents' morale and influence the population. In 1812, a British contemporary, William Napier, summarized the results of Soult's policy. –The people were gradually tranquillized; the military resources of the

[180]Lafon, *Justices d'exception napoléoniennes, militaire et civile, dans l'Espagne occupée: l'exemple de l'Andalousie (1810-1812)*, 79-80.

[181]Ibid., 82.

country drawn forth, and considerable bodies of native troops raised, and even successfully employed, to repress the efforts of the partisan chiefs."[182]

The use of a preexisting indigenous administration was bolstered by a real collaboration with the French forces. Its transformation into a selective and repressive tool was successful to counter any passive complicity, and to degrade the insurgents' capabilities, in terms of supplies, and recruitment. Soult's administration was not an economic multiplier but a direct support to the pacification machinery.

Economic Issues and Counterinsurgency

The 9 February 1810 Imperial decree ordered to ~~f~~feed the war by war." From now on, French commanders in Spain were compelled to self-sustain by any means. As a result, it was not rare that these generals stopped supplies coming from France on the Pyrenees choke-points. In these conditions, Andalusia, as the most distant province, scarcely received equipment and replacement from the Empire. Soult constantly complained about the monopolizers, like General Delaistre, Lorge, or Belliard, and regretted the absence of cavalry detachments which never arrived in Andalusia.[183] Soult's lament, ~~I~~I have to produce everything by myself, because I receive nothing," was the main reason he supported the development of the Andalusia economy. He achieved this

[182]Napier, *History of the War in the Peninsula and the South of France, from the year 1807 to the year 1814*, Vol. II, 120.

[183]S.H.A.T, C8 146, Lettres du Maréchal Soult au Maréchal Berthier datées du 17 mars 1810, du 05 juillet 1810 et du 29 octobre 1810 [Letters from Marshal Soult to Marshal Berthier, from 17 March 1810, 5 July 1810, and 29 October 1810], cited in Lafon, *L'Andalousie et Napoléon*, 406.

objective by a development plan focused on the Guadalquivir, and the build-up of a ~~"~~military-industrial" economy combined with the exploitation of natural resources.

Large-scale construction, to open the inland navigation on the Guadalquivir River began with Soult's decree on 22 September 1811. This project was planned to serve military interests. The Guadalquivir River would boost the lead supplies, coming from the Linares mines to the Seville foundries. It would also facilitate the flow of ammunition stored in Cordoba to the siege of Cadiz. Eventually, it would make possible the exportation of agricultural surplus from Cordoba to Seville. On a tactical point of view, river navigation ensured a faster flow of information from I Corps to V Corps, and avoided ground convoys, more vulnerable to ambushes.

Mining extraction constituted the second economic activity Soult focused on. Lead ores, in Linares and Sierra de Gador, were fully exploited as were the copper mines from Río Tinto. The prospecting for iron ores was encouraged in the vicinity of Granada to support the weapons and ammunition fabrication. A reward announced by the decree of February 1811, contributed to the discovery and immediate exploitation of the iron mine of Arenas del Rey. Soult also reinforced preexisting mining infrastructures. He financed with 200,000 *reales* the maintenance of Almadén mercury mine, and supported the sulfur mine in Conil (Jerez) and Benamaurel (Granada).[184] Thanks to the flourishing mining industry, the metallurgy sector, mainly based in Seville and Grenada, was able to fulfill the Grande Armée requirements. The Seville complex furnished the French army

[184]Lafon, *L'Andalousie et Napoléon*, 419.

with two hundred artillery guns in 1811 and 1812. The weapons industry in Granada produced one hundred rifles a week, and 7,245 kilograms of gunpowder a month.[185]

Besides military industries, Soult also supported local trade. The study of Malaga commercial record book by Jean-Marc Lafon, described the increase of all types of exports. From 1811 to 1812, the export of wine increased from 78,934 to 10,709, vinegar from 6,759 to 10,420, coal from 580 to 2,480, and sugar from 490 to 1,298 *arrobes*.[186]

The autarchic nature of the Empire economy was favorable for this trade expansion. It offered appropriate outlets for sugar and cotton, whose supplies were denied by the British blockade. Consequently Soult negotiated with Andalusia suppliers the intensification of these two cultures in exchange of a tariff decrease. He ordered this tariff agreement in the decree of 14 October 1810.

The result of this proactive macro-economic policy was mentioned by William Napier:

> The arsenal of construction at Seville was put into full activity; the mines of lead at Linares were worked; the copper of the river Tinto gathered for the supply of the foundries, and every provision for the use of a large army collected; privateers also were fitted out, a commerce was commenced with neutral nations [Barbaresque states, Batavian Republic] in the ports of Grenada; and finally, a secret, but considerable, traffic carried on with Lisbon itself, demonstrated the administrative talents of Soult.[187]

Soult conducted his plan as an exploitation of the occupied territories, and it was likely that he never envisioned a win-win collaboration with Andalusia. Reacting as a

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[185]Ibid., 423.

[186]From Spanish *arroba*, an old weight unit.

[187]Napier, *History of the War in the Peninsula and the South of France, from the year 1807 to the year 1814*, Vol. II, 120-121.

general more than a governor, he applied military-centric schemes to the economy. He built a powerful armament industry to sustain his troops and support the siege of Cadiz. He enabled this effort by large-scale reconstructions, and the exploitation of natural resources. Micro-economic stimulus, through job creation, and macro-economic impulse through international trade, were indirect but significant outcomes of this strategy.

Conclusion

Soult‘s increased political sense was instrumental to face the insurgency and was due to his extensive military background, and his personal influence upon the imperial staff. To solve the dilemma of limited resources, and extended lines of communications, he applied a selective operational approach. In controlled areas, characterized by urban centers, he ensured security missions to influence the population, and to support the collaboration. In mountainous areas, where insurgents found safe havens, he deployed flying-columns and applied positional defense to isolate the rebels, and destroy their supplies. He encouraged the build-up of indigenous forces as security forces, and strictly controlled the population through specific control measures.

From an administrative point of view, Soult did not reform the indigenous administration, but he was cautious to maintain local connections to gain Spanish obedience to French directives. He particularly kept an eye on the fiscal tool to sustain his corps, and to punish active and passive complicity with the insurgency. He leveraged the judicial court to decapitate the rebel networks while supporting official trials with an influence-centric campaign plan.

From an economic point of view, the exploitation of Andalusia was conducted to sustain the Army of the South, and the siege of Cadiz. It was also conducive to develop

the province by a cascading effect. On the one hand, the buildup of a robust armament industry increased micro-economic initiatives, and created employment. On the other hand, support to navigation along the Guadalquivir River, and improvement of the transportation networks favored exports, and macro-economic projects.

In the end, Soult really made the difference thanks to the configuration of a much more localized, and less aggressive insurgency than in the North of Spain. He had a clear operational scheme of maneuver, and exploited human terrain at full, while taking advantage of the cosmopolitan and commercial nature of Andalusia.

CHAPTER 5

THE SUCCESS OF A NASCENT DOCTRINE?

> Our domination was so peaceful in Andalusia that travelers could move without any escort at day and at night.
>
> — Alfred de Saint-Chamans, *Mémoires*

> The stability of Suchet‘s power in Aragon relied on his will to weaken the spirit of resistance, day by day.
>
> — William Napier, *History of the War in the Peninsula*

Insurgencies are complex conflicts which usually deny any attempts to look for a common denominator. The counterinsurgent‘s strategy depends on the insurgents‘ tactics, the pool of available forces, such as the configuration of the area of operation. However, the comparison of Andalusia and Aragon case-studies aims at seeking some points that are critical to any counterinsurgent effort, and likely delineates a pacification doctrine. Key to the entire strategy is the ability of the commander to leverage the cultural factor, and get the support of local governance. To achieve these objectives, an influence campaign is instrumental to manage the population expectations and affect its perceptions.

Case-Studies Comparison

Suchet and Soult successfully conducted counterinsurgency operations, but in different manners. To obtain this result, they used a methodology tailored to their operational situation. Terrain features, organization of the insurgency, and permissiveness of the environment were the variables which shaped their respective military problem. In both cases, the examination of figures confirms that French combat power was insufficient to match with the minimum recommendation of 25 counterinsurgents for

every 1,000 locals. In Aragon, Suchet had to control around 620,000 people with a 20,000 combatant strong army, in an area covering 48,000 square miles. Andalusia offered a much more formidable challenge. Soult deployed between 60,000 to 90,000 soldiers to pacify a province of 720,000 square miles, and encompassing 1,800,000 people. Under the circumstances, the problem of dispersion was easier to solve in Aragon. As mentioned by Alexander, ―Aragon was the only province in Spain to which the French devoted a large force for a long time to pacification operations before the guerrillas could secure a stronghold."[188] It is true that the French ability to dedicate an entire corps to stabilize an area of operation explained tactical success. At the same time, proximity with France allowed a faster replacement-system. Eventually, the planned integration of Catalonia into the imperial system incentivized the dedication of sufficient manpower to handle counter-guerillas operations. Once Suchet managed to get back units assigned to the operational reserve, and completed the sieges of Saragossa, and Tarragona, he practically gained freedom of action to achieve an acceptable level of security. On the contrary, Soult's efforts were hindered by extended lines of communications with France. The enemy incursions from Portugal and the siege of Cadiz drained French combat power as well. Conventional warfare never really disappeared from Andalusia and exerted a constant centrifugal force over the Army of the South. For these reasons, Soult had to be more inventive at the operational level in order to achieve his military goals.

The configuration of the insurgency was also different from one case-study to another. Alexander outlined that ―the guerrilla war in Aragon differed from the war in the

[188]Don Alexander, *Rod of Iron*, 60.

other provinces in the sense that the bands did not base themselves within the province.[189] The Aragonese *partidas* were highly mobile and operated from safe havens located in Navarre, or Catalonia. They were also more aggressive because the earlier French occupation heavily touched northern Spain. Insurgents from Andalusia applied different patterns. They were mainly fixed in local areas, where their recruitment overlapped with traditional smuggling. As a result, they were easier to target or to isolate from the population. In addition, the study of the insurgent leaders, or *cabecillas*, proved discrepancies in terms of leadership. In Aragon, the Spanish historian, Joseba de la Torre Campo, demonstrated that the initial form a violence employed by the insurgents was comparable to extortion of theft.[190] But great leaders, like Javier Mina or Francisco Espoz, were prompt to reverse the trend, while punishing disorders and bolstering nationalism. If the most notable and celebrated *cabecillas* are examined, a vast majority of them operated in northern Spain. Jáuregui, also known as *El Pastor*, harassed the French lines of communication in Navarre with a 2,000 insurgent strong *partida*. Juan Porlier, also known as *El Marquesito*, built up a 4,000 man network in the Asturias. Juan de Mendieta, *El Capuchino*, fought in the vicinity of Valladolid, whereas Jerónimo Merino operated in Burgos. The three most popular insurgent leaders, Juan Martín Díaz, aka *El Empecinado*, Javier Mina, and his uncle Francisco Espoz y Mina led in Aragon, and Navarre considerable troops, comparable to standing armies. In Andalusia, *cabecillas* never played a similar role due to their questionable patriotism. Esdaile outlined this

[189]Ibid., 239.

[190]Joseba de la Torre Campo, *Los campesinos navarros ante la Guerra napoleónica* [Navarre prior to the Napoleonic War] (Madrid, Spain: Ministerio de Agricultura, 1991), 73-74.

argument while describing Vicente Moreno's network, largely composed of deserters, and even murderers.[191] The example of Lieutenant-Colonel Benito Pelli, was also significant to understand the lack of leadership model in southern Spain. Assigned by Cadiz to coordinate the rebellion in the Sierra de Ronda, this Spanish officer was so incompetent and unpopular, that the Spanish regency arrested him in January 1812.[192] Eventually, criminal violence did not disappear in Andalusia when the Army of the South withdrew. Lafon examined the judicial registry of Mairena del Alcor, in the vicinity of Seville. He discovered that the monthly rate of arrested "insurgents" was about eight criminals in 1808. In 1814, this rate was about fifty arrests a month. Smuggling normalized in Andalusia, and developed after the French occupation, while demonstrating the low level of patriotic commitment expressed by the local insurgency.[193] In a nutshell, the Aragonese insurgency was an operational threat, difficult to strike, and highly motivated by competent leaders. On the contrary, the Andalusian insurgency was primarily dominated by criminal networks which conducted tactical level operations. Most of their leaders lacked of the charisma, or talent which characterized their northern counterparts.

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[191]Charles Esdaile, "Guerrilleros y banditos en Andalucia, 1808-1814," Conflicto y sociedad civil en la España napoleonica ["Partisans and Bandits in Andalusia, 1810-1814," Conflict and Civilian Society in Napoleonic Spain], *Actas de las V jornadas sobre la batalla de Bailén y la España contemporanea* (Jaen, Spain: Universidad de Jaén, 2004), 137-139.

[192]Alphonse Louis Grasset, *Malága, provincia francesa, 1811-1812* [Malaga, French Province] (Málaga, España: Universidad de Málaga, 1996), 126.

[193]Lafon, *L'Andalousie et Napoléon*, 401.

Eventually, the degree of acceptance of the French army in Aragon and Andalusia was contrasted and set various conditions to conduct counterinsurgency. Andalusia was a cosmopolitan region, open to trade and multi-cultural exchanges. More prone to follow liberalism and reforms against the Bourbon order, this province offered great opportunities for French-Spanish cooperation. On the contrary, Aragon was traumatized by bloody battles, and experienced much more destruction and sacrifices. The level of economic development was also less consistent than in the more fertile area of the south. Consequently, the Aragonese population was initially more reluctant to collaborate with the *Grande Armée.*

The significant differences between Suchet and Soult's operational environment directly influenced their counterinsurgent styles and strategies. From a military perspective, Soult was more inventive with his discriminate operational approach. But Suchet made the difference at the tactical level while empowering his subordinates.

> In 1811, General Louis Gabriel Suchet became the twenty-third marshal of the French Empire, a rank he richly deserved. During the year, he crushed the Spanish Army of Catalonia, advanced against those of Valencia and Murcia, and at year's end was besieging the city of Valencia. . . . He took the city in January 1812, and captured the rebels' most renowned commander, together with their largest remaining regular force.[194]

Regarding other than military operations, Suchet desired the commitment of the people, whereas Soult relied on their compliance. The Duke of Albufera also focused on the reorganization of the administration in the framework of a win-win concept. The Duke of Dalmatia submitted the local elites to only serve the French interests. Terror

[194]Connelly, *Napoleon's Satellite Kingdoms: Managing Conquered People*, 259.

versus conciliation, submission versus association, economy of war versus reconstruction characterized the contrasting relation between Soult and Suchet's approaches.

Marshall Suchet managed to achieve his goals while dedicating his main efforts to administration and governance. Counter-guerrilla operations were only a tool to protect the bureaucracy, enforce the law and facilitate the tax-collection. He deeply transformed Aragon by simplifying his structure, and preserving the indigenous backbone. His approach was mainly political-centric.

Thanks to a more favorable context, Marshal Soult obtained success while developing a military-centric strategy which favorably cascaded over the other lines of operations. He primarily implemented an exploitation policy, permitted by the isolationism and the inconsistency of hard-liners, as well as the submission of local power-brokers. As mentioned by Jomini about Andalusia, ~~–t~~he moment came when he [Soult] met his expectations, and when the Spaniards themselves, considered the power of the new king to be definitely consolidated in Andalusia.[195] The author's Swiss nationality and his intellectual prestige granted Jomini with a real independence from the French when he wrote his memoirs. His freedom of thinking and intellectual integrity ensures the objectivity of his commentary on Soult's policy.

Significance and Measures of Success

The cross-checking of British, French and Spanish secondary sources are of great value to depict guerrilla warfare. As far as primary sources are concerned, they also gave

[195]Antoine Henri de Jomini, *Guerre d'Espagne, extraits des souvenirs inédits du général Jomini* [War of Spain, Extracts from General Jomini's Unpublished Memories] (Paris, France: Baudoin, 1892), 144.

useful clues concerning the actions of the *Grande Armée*. Nevertheless, propaganda, counter-propaganda, and witnesses‘ personal agendas significantly distorted the historical truth. For that purpose, specific measures of success are proposed to demonstrate the significance of French achievements in Andalusia and Aragon. Among them can be mentioned the freedom of movement of the *Grande Armée*, and the build-up of indigenous security forces.

During the Peninsular War, freedom of movement of the French army was severely restricted in regions like Navarre or the Asturias. Many testimonies from French officers confirmed that entire battalions were tasked to secure convoys. In his memoirs, Captain Marcelle recounted that it was not rare for an infantry company to escort a single messenger. In comparison with these provinces, the mobility of small detachments in Andalusia and Aragon was unmatched. Between 1809 and 1811, the rapidity of the replacement-system, mentioned by Suchet, confirms that the main supply roads were sufficiently safe to easily move untrained recruits from France to Spain. The minimal escort of wounded soldiers back to Bayonne and Toulouse also indicates the level of security along the main lines of communication. When Rocca compared the situation in Burgos between 1808 and 1810, he acknowledged that ―it was now possible to communicate [from Burgos], with an equal facility, between Biscaye and Aragon.”[196] Morvan, in his study of the Imperial soldier, even outlined that ―at the beginning of 1813, the French soldier was going unarmed among populations which had previously repelled Moncey, and had defended Saragossa.”[197]

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[196]Rocca, *Mémoires sur la guerre des Français en Espagne*, 22.

[197]Morvan, *Le Soldat Impérial, 1800-1814*, 129.

In Andalusia, Soult's relative easiness to move troops from Murcia to Portugal, and his operational choice to avoid any permanent defensive position on the main roads also correlate French freedom of movement. When Colonel de Saint-Chamans was assigned as Soult's aide, he travelled from Madrid to Seville with only six guards. In a letter to his family from 26 December 1811, Captain Francois Leopold du Pouget, wrote that "Andalusia is very quiet, and to go [From Ubeda, Jaén prefecture] to Seville, four guards are enough. And I often ride alone."[198]

The examination of the Spanish collaboration confirms that the buildup of a native security forces was a second indicator of success. In Aragon, Suchet managed to build a reliable network of informants, whereas his French counterparts lacked of intelligence everywhere else in Spain. To sustain his pool of spies, Suchet dedicated a considerable amount of money. In a letter written on 22 January 1812, Suchet mentioned to Brigadier General Reille that he would provide him with four thousand francs to pay his "sources."[199] This network was helpful to conduct intelligence-driven raids and successful targeting operations against the main insurgent leaders. So that Francisco Espoz y Mina confirmed in his memoirs that he was surprised by the French troops. "On 23 April 1812, at dawn, I was sold by the partisan Malcarado, who gave some information to Brigadier General Panetier. . . . I was attacked by five hussars at the door

[198]Arnaud François Léopold Sigismond du Pouget, *Lettres et notes de campagne*, (Paris, France: Leroy, 1911), 478.

[199]S.H.A.T, Lettre du maréchal Suchet au général Reille [Letter from Marshal Suchet to Brigadier General Reille], 22 Janvier 1812 [22 January 1812], C 8.89.

of my house."[200] During the Peninsular War, Mina was certainly the most prominent *cabecilla*. He managed to recruit 10,000 partisans and inflicted severe damage to the *Grande Armée* in northern Spain. If such a revered and celebrated insurgent was spotted out, the efficiency of the French intelligence network in the area is not anymore questionable. At the same time, some Spaniards were recruited by Suchet to form indigenous counter-guerrilla forces. Barbastro, a former Spanish smuggler, built up, to his own expenses, a company of infantry which was —more useful than a French battalion." Suchet also mentioned that —daily reports allowed [him] to pursue them [the insurgents] in their most hidden havens. Several partisans were surprised at Alvalate, in the vicinity of Barbastro and in Monzon."[201] Convinced that he could use the Aragonese to his own profit, Suchet finally created four indigenous companies of infantry in a decree from 31 March 1811. He partly used them as constabulary and auxiliary forces.[202] In two months, he manned these companies, and maintained them throughout the conflict.

> With a view to give the Aragonese a more direct interest in the success of our operations, and to find employment for those Spanish officers who had attached themselves to our cause, the commander-in-chief [Suchet] formed four companies of fusiliers, and two of gendarmes; they were soon clothed, equipped, and armed for service; the soldiers were all able-bodied men, indefatigable, and excellent

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[200]Francisco Espoz y Mina, *Précis de la vie du général Mina* (Paris, France: Imprimeries Pinard, 1825), 37-39.

[201]Suchet, *Mémoires*, 79-80.

[202]Arrêté de Suchet du 31 mars 1811 [Suchet's Directive, 31 March 1811]. AN, 384 AP 40 mentioned in Gildas Lepetit, *Annales historiques de la Révolution française*, no. 345 (Paris, France: Délégation au Patrimoine culturel de la Gendarmerie nationale, avril-juin 2007), 5.

guides. They were paid by the zeal and valor they displayed on several occasions.[203]

Success of indigenous security forces was uneven in northern Spain. In particular, the example of the *gendarmes cantabres* showed that the establishment of native constabulary forces was a failure. In November 1809, Spanish companies organized on the model of the French gendarmerie were created to secure the lines of communications between France and the Basque country. The four initial units were put under the command of Major General Thouvenot. Between 1812 and 1813, these companies were plagued by desertion. In June 1813, only 22 local *gendarmes* remained. They were 16 in January 1814.[204] In comparison, Suchet's counter-guerrilla forces were always fully manned and highly operational. The Catalan scout company, or *compagnie des guides Catalans* was exemplar to illustrate this argument. In charge of reconnaissance and liaison for the *Grande Armée* between 1811 and 1813, this company followed the French Army during her withdrawal. When it was disbanded in 1814, the unit was still manned with four officers and one hundred soldiers, an indicator of the native involvement and fidelity.[205]

In Andalusia, the effectiveness of the indigenous units was mentioned in the previous chapter. Based on the worst case scenario, Soult set up 4,000 Spanish partisans to conduct military operations. Native security forces provided him with situational

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[203]Suchet, *Mémoires*, 22-23.

[204]Didier Davin, http://frederic.berjaud.free.fr/Articles_de_Didier_Davin/Gendarmes%20cantabres/gendarmes_cantabres.htm (accessed 17 March 2011).

[205]Didier Davin, http://frederic.berjaud.free.fr/Articles_de_Didier_Davin/Guides%20Catalans/Guides_Catalans.htm (accessed 12 March 2011).

understanding, language proficiency, and intelligence. They also strongly supported the French campaign of influence which aimed at describing the insurgents as criminals. When Soult built the first three native companies, he gave them the name of *Escopeteros* to reassure the population. The *Escopeteros* were light infantry companies created in 1776 by the constables of Seville and Grenada to struggle against smugglers and bandits. Doing so, Soult wanted to convince the locals that counter-guerrilla warfare was a synonym for security. Soult favored the French model of the National Guard, taking into account that ―the Spaniards were more interested in the protection of their lands and properties, than the color of their uniform."[206] Even if quantity prevailed on quality in Soult's mind, the impact on the population did matter. The comparison with Joseph's royal army gives a clue to understand Soult's method. Lafon estimated that Madrid was strong with 3,500 Spanish auxiliaries in 1810.[207] Joseph's motivation was political as he wanted to prevent the Spanish officers to join the insurgency while reviving the traditions of the old regime. Mainly built on an honorary basis, the royal units were standing regiments which lacked of esprit de corps. They received harsh commentaries from contemporary French officers. Juan Mercader Riba outlined their poor operational readiness while describing Joseph's army as ―a mere symbol . . . with mediocre results."[208]

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[206]S.H.A.T, C8 146, Lettre du maréchal Soult au général Sébastiani datée du 12 juin 1810 [Letter from Marshal Soult to Brigadier General Sebastiani, 12 June 1810].

[207]Lafon, *L'Andalousie et Napoléon*, 250.

[208]Juan Mercader Riba, *José Bonaparte Rey de España, Estructura del Estado bonapartista español* [Joseph Bonaparte King of Spain, Structure of the Spanish Bonapartist State] (Madrid, España: CSIC, Instituto Jeronimo Zurita, 1983), 300.

Soult's strategy was radically different. He avoided creating regular units, whose recruitment appalled the population. He focused his efforts on non-uniformed and irregular units. In August 1811, eleven counter-guerrillas companies were manned with a total strength of 1,284 natives. In comparison, Madrid had only eight similar units manned with 695 partisans in May 1812. The region of Alpujarras epitomized their effectiveness. Describing this area in a letter to Brigadier General Sebastiani, Soult mentioned the high level of security in the towns of Berja, Adra and Ugijar. He clearly attributed this success to the Spanish *compagnies franches*.[209] Soult's assessment was cross-checked by Moral Villalobos, a Spanish hidalgo, whose son was killed by the French army. In his memoirs, the latter vilified Martín Llanos, a Spanish power-broker, who was able to recruit more than two hundred Spaniards in Berja and Laujar to support Brigadier General Sebastiani's French troops.[210] If the Alpujarras' units were a model, Spanish counter-guerrilla units were also successful every else in Andalusia. In 1812, thirty percent of the Andalusia insurgent networks were destroyed.

As far as the economic features can provide useful measures in a counterinsurgency environment, tax collection was initially envisioned in this study as a screening criterion to assess success. Alexander tightly linked French tax collection with pacification. In Aragon, facts seem to support this argument. In 1811, two years after the Imperial decree ordering the French army's self-sustainment in Spain, Aragon tax collection streamlined III Corps. One year payrolls were payed to the soldiers, and

[209]S.H.A.T, C8 146, Lettre du maréchal Soult au général Sébastiani datée du 19 septembre 1810 [Letter from Soult to Sebastiani, 19 September 1810].

[210]Juan Gabriel del Moral Villalobos, *Memorias de un Alpujarreño entre Fondón y Berja* (Almeria, Spain: Arraez, 1999), cited in Lafon, *L'Andalousie et Napoléon*, 317

expenses due to the artillery and engineer units' replenishment were settled.[211] More than ten million *francs* were reversed to consolidate the public debt. Nicolas-François, Count Mollien, one of Napoleon's chief financial advisers, even congratulated Suchet. He outlined that Aragon financial administration managed to ~~a~~ppease the hatred of people who were so attached to their homeland while charging them with taxes."[212] Napoleon ordered an exceptional tax in 1809 which equaled around seventy million *francs*. This tax was likely to overburden the economic capabilities of Aragon and Valencia, but it was collected and peacefully absorbed by the province in 1811.

From a theoretical point of view, the examination of Andalusia's fiscal pressure correlates the Aragonese situation. The registry of the Army of the South clearly shows an increasing amount of taxes collected by the French administration between 1810 and 1812. Was it due to the enhanced freedom of movement of collecting units, to a greater acceptance from the population, or the reconstruction of the Spanish bureaucracy? The above factors certainly contributed to this visible success. However the tax collection cannot indicate the economic improvement of Andalusia, because Soult did not design it for that purpose. In fact, Joseph conducted a conciliatory policy which explained the low level of fiscal requirements in 1810. Progressively Soult mitigated this moderate approach and tripled the amount with 16,113,638 *francs* in 1812. Combined with an agricultural crisis in 1811, the tax-collection eventually exhausted the province. For these reasons, fiscal measures are not considered in this study as a reliable indicator for success.

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[211]Morvan, *Le Soldat Impérial*, 1800-1814, 381.

[212]Reynaud, *Contre-guérilla en Espagne*, 147.

Common Practices

The carrot and stick approach, which recognized the necessity to balance violence and repression to found all policy, was an overarching concept which drove French counterinsurgency in Andalusia and Aragon. In both cases, the French marshals sought to leverage the religious factor to facilitate the occupation. They also actively put a ―Spanish face" on the imperial apparatus to obtain compliance from the population. Eventually, Suchet and Soult conducted a multi-faceted propaganda campaign to influence the natives and undermine the insurgency.

As mentioned by Alexander, ―one area in which Suchet scored a clear triumph was his clerical policy. The clergy represented a powerful voice for the propagation of either peace or war, depending on which side could mobilize its support."[213] Suchet understood that Catholicism was deeply engrained in the Aragonese society, and was cautious to enlist the services of religious notables. On 19 June 1809, he took advantage of the shock generated by the French victories at María and Belchite to deliver an official proclamation to the people of Aragon. In the preamble, he promised that ―religion and its ministries will be respected."[214] This policy was clearly undermined by the French Emperor's position towards the Catholic Church. Ordering the abolition of the inquisition, and suppressing the clergy's privileges, Napoleon left ―some 2,000 to 3,000 unemployed monks in Aragon to stir trouble."[215] But with the help of Miguel Santander,

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[213]Alexander, *Rod of Iron*, 52.

[214]S.H.A.T, Proclamation impériale aux habitants d'Aragon [Imperial proclamation to the people of Aragon], 19 juin 1809 [19 June 1809], C8, 28.

[215]Ibid., 53.

vice-archbishop of Saragossa, who gave the example, Suchet attracted to him the fringe of the secular clergy who would preach for peace, in exchange for respect and recognition from the French. The Saragossa chapter was reconstituted under his supervision and was partly tasked to ―provide information related to public order." He also assigned new bishops in Lerida, Teruel, Barbastro and Albaracin. Everywhere French abuses against the Church were punished and the Catholic religion fully restored. To smooth popular fervor, Suchet officially refused to transfer the silversmith from *Nuestra Señora del Pilar*, the Saragossa Basilica, to Madrid. After the siege of Tarragona, Suchet mentioned in his memoirs that ―the clergy, flattered by an unexpected protection, showed favorable dispositions."[216] Promising an amnesty, it even convinced one hundred and fifty insurgents to swear on the Gospel to never take again the arms against the French. In 1811, and thanks to well-chosen native clergymen, Suchet turned the Aragon church into a powerful tool of pacification. However, he recognized that the clergy ―was reduced to obedience and deprived from powers which exceeded its spiritual ministry."

In Andalusia, religion offered, as soon as 1808, significant connections to the insurgents' propaganda. In October 1808, Francisca de Paula Caballero, received the apparition of the holy Virgin in the vicinity of Lucena.[217] The rumor spread and offerings were put on every altar to fight against the invaders. In 29 April 1809, the Junta of Badajoz created the *cruzadas*, military formations financed by the Church. The *cruzadas*

[216]Suchet, *Mémoires*, 253.

[217]Lafon, *L'Andalousie et Napoléon*, 359.

were conducted by seminarians and its soldiers carried a red cross on their clothes.[218] The Central Junta even ordered the constitution of a *cruzada* in every Spanish province. In February 1810, Muñoz and Fernando Berrocal, Spanish friars, led the unsuccessful upheaval in Alhama and Malaga.[219] According to Proharam, French consul in Malaga, clergymen were also essential to fuel the hostility of the public opinion. ~~–~~In public plazas and promenades, this kind of people always conducts meetings. They speak so insolently that they magnify the allegedly successes of their partisans."[220]

The most threatening *cruzada* operated in Sierra de Ronda under the command of Manuel Jiménez Guazo with 4,000 combatants. Colonel Rémond, already mentioned for his ruthlessness, finally destroyed it in December 1810 while burning Las Nieves monastery. But in 1811, the *cruzadas* movement was defeated. First, the religious orders in southern Spain were opulent and less prepared for the hardship of war than their Northern counterparts. Second, Soult implemented a clever strategy with the Church. On the one hand, the *afrancesados* police strictly controlled religious leaders. The study of deportation confirmed that 1,515 Spanish hostages were brought to France in May 1812. Two thirds of them belonged to the clergy.[221] On the other hand, Soult had a deep

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[218]Pascual Martinez, *Frailes guerrilleros en la Guerra de la Independencia* [Monastic Orders and Partisans during the War of Independence] (Zaragoza, España: Institución Fernando el Catolico, 2000), 52.

[219]Lafon, *L'Andalousie et Napoléon*, 364.

[220]AN, 402 AP46, Lettre de Proharam à Soult (Letter from Consul Proharam to Marshal Soult], 14 juin 1810 [14 June 1810], mentioned in Ibid., 365.

[221]Jean-René Aymes, *La déportation sous le Premier Empire:les Espagnols en France* [Deportation under the First Empire: The Spaniards in France] (Paris, France: Publications de la Sorbonne, 1983), 333-334.

understanding of the ecclesiastical psyche in Andalusia. Juan Manuel Moscoso y Peralta, archbishop of Granada, and Manuel Cayetano Muñoz, bishop of Seville, preached for social order, and were sensible to Soult's conciliatory policy. The reopening of the churches and the authorization for the priests to wear their cassocks were greatly appreciated. And profit-sharing to the tithe collection finally convinced the high religious hierarchy to support the French.

In the light of the imperial capabilities, the *Grande Armée* had neither the expertise, nor sufficient time to establish a French bureaucracy in Spain. As a consequence, the use of the local administration and the local elites was a pragmatic exigency to get legitimacy. Suchet and Soult understood that mobile-columns and blind repression would not suppress the insurgent resistance. The ~~h~~ispanization" was after all the way to govern indirectly. They reformed the Bourbon administration to convert it into a pacification tool. In both cases, the French marshals did not envision an unconditional support from the indigenous population, but they planned that noble *afrancesados* and enlightened merchants would influence the masses. In his memoirs, Suchet outlined the role of Spanish notables.

> To the advises of these meritorious men, the governor is indebted for his having conquered public opinion in the very exercise of the rigorous measures which he was directed to carry into effect. Fully considering the situation of the country, they accepted the honorable mission of interposing moderation and justice, in the intercourse between inhabitants and the soldiery, and watched the interests of their fellow countrymen with a perseverance which never relaxed in the pursuit of that object.[222]

In practice, Soult and Suchet managed to build a viable system by the administrative combination of native bureaucrats, and French skilled administrators.

[222]Suchet, *Mémoires*, 290.

Three main principles were conducive to support the ―hispanization." The simplification of the Bourbon structure, induced by a centralized control and the abolition of privileges, streamlined the native bureaucracy. The creation of new districts, the juxtaposition of the *corregidores* and *alcaldes* with French tax collectors, and the use of people-trusted *contaduría* participated to this process. The transparency of the reforms and the association of Spanish notables to the main administrative decisions were also key to support organizational change. Eventually, the punishment of abuses and regular remunerations to the Spanish functionaries restored morality in public affairs and completed the ―Spaniard first" policy.

The leverage of religion and the hispanization were best practices implemented in Andalusia and Aragon but the use of the ―influence weapon" as a warfighting function was certainly the most remarkable achievement of the *Grande Armée* in those two provinces. The understanding of the cultural environment, the identification of social expectations, and the instrumentalization of potential in-fighting contributed to support the French ―information campaign."

Suchet influenced the population while investing in cultural symbols. Aware of the Aragonese attachment to their saint patron *Nuestra Señora del Pilar*, he prevented the seizure of her sanctuary. Doing so, he significantly put the people's minds at rest, and appealed to the clergy's sympathy. Suchet also showed his respect for the local historical heritage while creating the ―Academy of the Friends of the Province of Aragon," which was tasked to promote traditions, and literature. ―He naturally became the director of this

institute, thus indicating his admiration for the local culture."[223] And if he destroyed the fortifications of the San Juan de la Peña sanctuary, he was also cautious to create a foundation for the memorial of the kings of Aragon.[224] Ferdinand of Aragon was a Spanish monarch and a fifteenth century hero who expelled the Muslims out of the Iberian Peninsula during the *Reconquista* episode. In the Aragonese psyche, he was certainly the most cherished symbol of their independence, and the best way for Suchet to flatter their pride. Finally, Suchet sought to erase the stigma of war while restoring broken-down buildings. He especially focused his effort on the hospitals of Saragossa, Teruel and Huesca. He gathered seven hundred Spanish orphans in the hospice of the Misericordia. He also rebuilt most of the bull-fighting arenas, very popular places for Spanish social and sport events.[225]

In addition, Suchet clearly conducted non-lethal targeting operations against the insurgents. On 9 January 1812, the terms used for Valencia capitulation agreement showed clear signs of reconciliation. The Article I stated that ~~"r~~eligion will be preserved." The Article II also mentioned that ~~"n~~o inquiry will be conducted to investigate the past of those who participated to the revolution"; "former Spanish officers' pensions will be payed to ensure their existence." Giving clues of clemency, Suchet aimed at undermining the recruitment and the unity of the insurgency. He

[223]Rollet, *Civil and military actions of Marshall Suchet in Aragon*, 13.

[224]Suchet, Mémoires, 60-61.

[225]Ibid., 309.

completed this declaration by financial compensations to the Spanish families whose houses were destroyed during the siege.[226]

Eventually, Suchet communicated in the press on the harmful insurgent actions. The French Empire financed around thirty-two newspapers in Northern Spain during the conflict. Among them, Suchet extensively used the *Gazeta nacional de Zaragosa* to conduct his information campaign.[227] The pacification constituted the core of this *Gazeta* while denying the insurgents the status of combatant and resistants. The rebels were systematically portrayed as bandits and their action associated to public disorder. British manipulation, criminal activities of the *partidas*, exemplar behavior of *afrancesados* constituted the main arguments of this active campaign whose ambition was mainly a short-term counter-propaganda.[228]

Soult adopted the same tools than Suchet but extended the spectrum of influence while compromising the Spaniards. He expressed this strategy in his recommendation to Major General Jean-Pierre Maransin: "Make an extensive use of the Spaniards, and do not neglect any means to compromise them, in order to compel them to serve and be useful. You will promote their favorable actions."[229] To enforce this advice, Soult

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[226]A.N Arrêt du maréchal Suchet [Marshal Suchet's directive], 09 janvier 1813 [9 January 1813], 384 AP 179, mentioned in Reynaud, *Contre-guérilla en Espagne*, 149.

[227]Frederic Dauphin, La gazette nationale de Saragosse, entre collaboration et Afrancesamiento [The National Gazette of Saragossa, Between Collaboration and Afrancesamiento], *Annales historiques de la Révolution française,* no. 336 (Paris, France: Armand Collin, 2004), 2.

[228]Ibid., 5.

[229]Lettre du maréchal Soult au général Maransin datée du 10 septembre 1811 [Letter from Soult to Maransin from 10 September 1811], cited in Alphonse Louis Grasset, *Malaga province française* (Paris, France: Lavauzelle, 1910), 244.

ordered that captured insurgents should be executed by Spanish auxiliaries as soon as possible, under press coverage. It was a way to tie their hands and ~~to~~ boost the morale of Spaniards who greatly served his majesty."[230]

In the newspapers as well as in his proclamations, Soult outlined the criminal composition of the *partidas* while mentioning that most of them were manned with 3,000 galley slaves from Morocco who were appealed by promises of looting.[231] The connection between insurgency and criminality was systematically hammered by the *afrancesados* authorities. Theater and cultural events provided them with an ideal platform to convey their message to the public opinion. Emmanuel Larraz, a French researcher who studied the relation between politics and theater during the Peninsular war, mentioned the success received by the Spanish playwright Antero Benito y Núñez. He performed his play, *Calzones en Alcolea,* in Seville and Grenada on 15 April 1811. It constituted ~~a~~ satyr of the insurgents whose extreme violence was unmatched in Madrid or Barcelona."[232]

Soult's argument echoed in the Spanish society mainly because the criminal connection with the rebellion was proven. Lafon collected several cases of galley slaves' enrollment in the insurgency. In 1809, Martín Hispano enrolled forty convicts from Malaga. ~~I~~n December 1810, one hundred and fifty convicts were embarked on the *San*

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[230]Grasset, *Malaga province française*, 442.

[231]Gotteri, *Soult, Maréchal d'Empire et homme d'Etat*, 315.

[232]Emmanuel Larraz, *La guerre d'Indépendance espagnole au théâtre* [Spanish War of Independence and Theater] (Aix-en-Provence, France: Presses Universitaires de Provence, 1988), 170.

José felucca to incorporate the army of Cadiz."[233] The use of public trials of insurgents by criminal courts, already mentioned in the previous chapter, offered another sound box to influence the populace on the security theme. This propaganda was so successful that Esdaile mentioned that more neutral newspapers even relayed this message.

> So bad has the situation become that French successes were now applauded, as when the punitive column succeeded in surprising the *partida* of the notorious *Borbón* at Fuentecen, the comment of one of Granada newspaper being that ~~a~~as a result of their frequent bad behavior in the *pueblos*, the death of these soldiers means almost as much as does that of the enemy."[234]

Soult and Suchet managed, at some degree, to convince the Spanish population that patriotism was not the primary driver for the *partidas*. In both cases, they advertised the benefits of the French administration, they promised amnesty to the fence-sitters, and vilified the hard-liners.

Conclusion

Andalusia and Aragon offered different challenges to the *Grande Armée* characterized by the structure of the insurgency, the permissiveness of the population, and the willingness of the local elites to cooperate. French counterinsurgency successes cannot be denied thanks to the testimony of reliable primary sources from both sides. Spanish, French as well as British secondary sources also recognize that the most significant part of the insurrection was defeated between 1809 and 1812. The freedom of movement of the *Grande Armée* and the build-up of a viable native bureaucracy and efficient indigenous security forces remain the most significant indicators of French

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[233]Lafon, *L'Andalousie et Napoléon*, 391.

[234]Esdaile, *The Peninsular War*, 432.

achievement. Tax collection effort apparently met the expenses of the French corps, and can also be a measure to judge the administration of the provinces. However, the induced economic exhaustion, especially in Andalusia, cannot ensure enduring results. That is why the fiscal tool is more questionable as an indicator of success.

From the comparison of two different French strategies in non-contiguous provinces, some common practices emerge to shape a nascent doctrine of counterinsurgency. The leverage of the religious factor, the instrumentalization of native structures, and the implementation of an influence-focused and population-centric campaign draw the lines of this pattern of thinking.

The individual competence of Suchet and Soult, the quality of the officer corps combined with the way they crafted individual approaches for individual areas were certainly instrumental to understand the birth of the French counterinsurgency school in Spain. In 1830, when the conquest of Algeria began, French officers converted the principles experienced in the peninsula to pacify Northern Africa. The doctrinal bridge between the Napoleonic and the colonial wars was erected.

CHAPTER 6

A BRIDGE TO THE COLONIAL WARS?

> It was neither armies nor fortresses that were to be conquered in Spain, but that one yet multiplied sentiment which filled the whole people. It was the inmost soul of each and every one that resisted the blow-which neither ball nor bayonet could reach.
>
> — Albert de Rocca, *Mémoires sur la guerre des Français en Espagne*

> We finally managed to submit the Arabs, while dividing them and handling them one by one.
>
> — Thomas Bugeaud, *Mémoires*

One of the goals of this thesis was to understand the main factors which influence a counterinsurgent strategy, in the light of the Peninsular War. To this end, the study discussed the political, economic, and social environment which prevailed in Spain prior to the war. It also examined the general configuration of the insurgency while describing its background, objectives, and courses of action. The Andalusia and Aragon case-studies then provided a basis to analyze how different practitioners developed innovative solutions to pacify their respective areas of responsibility.

The comparison of the case studies outlined a common denominator which constituted a plausible link between comparable practices and the birth of a coherent doctrine of counterinsurgency. In addition, this thesis attempted to demonstrate the significance of Soult and Suchet‘s approaches, and to build relevant indicators of success to support the argumentation.

However, this analysis will not avoid the failures of the *Grande Armée* in Spain. It will thus conclude by describing the main French counterinsurgency problems in the Iberian Peninsula. Eventually, the study will depict how the French nascent doctrine

influenced the colonial generation, focusing on Marshal Thomas Bugeaud‘s experiences in Northern Africa.

Factors of Success

In Andalusia as well as in Aragon, the initial permissiveness of the operational environment deeply influenced the French counterinsurgent strategy. This situation was mainly characterized by the more or less *Afrancesados* influence, the status of the native bureaucracy, or the relation between the agrarian nobility with the church and the local population.

On the one hand, Suchet built a long-term policy which relied on his comprehensive professional background, a deep understanding of the Spanish culture, and a clear grasp that other than military tools offered better solutions to support the pacification. His tactical ability to rapidly transition from conventional to unconventional warfare made the difference while optimizing his subordinate‘s freedom of action. The constitution of a robust officer corps, disciplined troops, and selected small unit leaders eventually incentivized the implementation of decentralized command, critical to exploit opportunities at full.

On the other hand, Soult was more inclined to conduct a military centric policy whose short-term results hardly matched with enduring effects. However, his mastery of the operational art, and the way he polarized the population while balancing between terror and conciliation proved effective. External factors were certainly of great help. The criminalization of the Andalusia insurgent networks allowed Soult to capitalize on the public order theme, while giving a powerful sound box to the collaborationist trend. The

regional cosmopolitanism facilitated the penetration of liberalism, and the propagation of the revolutionary spirit while converting the elites to the French cause.

But the common response provided by Soult and Suchet underlined two major tactical principles. In counterinsurgency, small unit leaders' traditional scope needed to extend to intelligence collection, propaganda, and counter-propaganda. The battalion, permanently assigned to its area of operation, was also the right level to fuse the information, to navigate the human terrain, and to craft individual approaches to specific areas.

French Counterinsurgency Problems

When Napoleon asserts in his memoirs that "this war of Spain was a terrible wound, the very cause of France misfortune," he reminds us that the *Grande Armée* did not succeed in operationalizing local best practices into a coherent counterinsurgent policy. It is true that most of the French general officers did not capture the real nature of the war they faced in Spain. Even the Emperor underestimated guerrilla warfare, and never expressed any consistent directives to deal with it. Prone to respond to violence by retaliation, and biased by their previous experiences in *Vendée* and Italy, most French commanders developed heavily-handed conventional solutions. However, an analysis of French failure can not overlook the significance of the complex interdependence between tactical and strategic factors.

Napoleon made the decision to deploy replacement units for counterinsurgent purposes. At the beginning of the war, the equation was sound to surge manpower, but the growing casualties and the drain of veterans induced by the campaign of Russia gradually weakened the French troops. In his study of the French force management,

Arnold perfectly described this phenomenon, while explaining the institutionalized erosion of the *Grande Armée*.

> A typical Peninsula regiment of 2,500 men would send 120 to 200 men back to France as a depot unit, 50 to the artillery, 10 to the *gendarmes*, and 12 of the best men to the Imperial Guard. These subtractions, coupled with the unprecedented guerilla-inflicted losses experienced in the never secure rear areas, seriously eroded the staying power of the infantry regiment. It got worse in 1811 and thereafter when Napoleon withdrew the best troops from the Peninsula to prepare for the Russian invasion.[235]

Consequently, inexperienced recruits, led by declining cadres, were not flexible enough to oppose more and more experienced partisans. And the situation worsened in 1811 when the best troops were massively diverted to prepare the Russian campaign, leaving disconcerted troops against an inexhaustible pool of *partidas*.

Napoleon made a second mistake while forgetting one of his maxim, ―nothing is so important in war as an undivided command: for this reason, when war is carried on against a single power, there should be only one army, acting upon one base, and conducted by one chief."[236] When Napoleon made the decision to ―dled the war by war," and created military districts, he precisely violated his principle. He undermined his brother's leadership while giving directly orders to the military commanders. Joseph expressed his concerns to the Emperor to clarify the chain of command, and gain unity of purpose. ―I beg your majesty to give his orders on this point clearly. . . . I must have councilors, not masters.'[237] But Napoleon never relieved his brother. As provincial

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[235]James Arnold, ―A Reappraisal of Column Versus Line in the Peninsular War," *The Journal of Military History* 68, no. 2 (Society for Military History, April 2004).

[236]David G. Chandler, *The Military Maxims of Napoleon* (New York, NY: MacMillan Company), 76.

[237]Glover, *Legacy of Glory*, 42.

governors were concerned about their own areas, and reported directly to Paris, coordinated actions between military districts were severely hindered.

The increasing pressures to self-sustain in Spain were a direct outcome of the catastrophic financial situation of the French Empire. This policy, which fueled the antagonism of the rural populace, was fatal to the *Grande Armée*, and aborted any attempts to win hearts and minds. Moreover, the intense rivalries which opposed Napoleon's commanders were aggravated by the fact they were given administrative boundaries to conduct their operations, and no geographical responsibilities. French Marshals often envisioned their province as their own property, and were reluctant to collaborate with Madrid or other units whose action was perceived as an unbearable interference.

In the mid-term, French strategic faults accumulated and overburdened the shoulders of tactical leaders, while neutralizing the effects of their local successes, and preventing their extension.

Spain, the Craddle of the *Africains*

Marshal Louis Faidherbe, Marshal Joseph Galliéni, and Marshal Hubert Lyautey were the most successful *Africains*.[238] All of them were directly or indirectly influenced by the organizational and native-centric tradition initiated by Soult and Suchet in Spain.

[238]Marshal Galliéni and Marshal Lyautey were mentioned in the first chapter of this thesis. As a reminder, the former was linked to the conquest of Madagascar, while the latter was associated with the occupation of Morocco. Concerning Louis Faidherbe (1818 to 1889), he was a French General Officer and the Governor of Senegal. He created indigenous security forces to support the French operations in Western Africa. He was especially the father of the régiments de *tirailleurs sénégalais* [Senegalese skirmishers] who bravely fought within the French army during the First and Second World Wars.

Among them, Marshal Bugeaud and Marshal Clauzel were junior-officers who experienced the profession of arms during the Peninsular War. They were the one who finally linked up the Napoleonic with the Colonial generation, while transitioning from imperial counterinsurgency warfare to pacification warfare.

From 1808 to 1812, Suchet and Soult conducted a development policy, embodied by the restoration of the Aragonese Imperial canal, and the large-scale improvement of the Guadalquivir River. These first attempts constituted a prelude for the generation of colonial officers who put a premium on territorial organization as a part of the conquest administration. The Spanish generation also demonstrated that indigenous security forces, especially employed in counter guerrilla warfare, were of considerable support to pacify large or rugged terrain with limited resources. The conquest of Algeria (1830 to 1847) demonstrated that these lessons were not forgotten. Fifteen year after the Peninsular War, the French army was again engaged in a very similar theater of operations. Rugged terrain, decentralized insurgency, religion, and native political decrepitude gave a sense of *déjà vu*. Exerting the same qualities than Suchet, Bugeaud eventually governed Algeria from 1840 to 1847, and proved to be his worthy successor.

In 1808, Thomas Bugeaud was 1st Lieutenant and participated to the *Dos de Mayo* repression in Madrid. In December 1808, he fought with the 116th *Régiment de ligne* - III Corps during the siege of Saragossa. Promoted captain the same year, he actively participated to Suchet‘s flying-columns and chased insurgents in the neighboring provinces of Navarre, Catalonia and Valencia. As a battalion commander, he was noticed by Suchet for his valor and leadership, and assigned as the garrison commander of

Valencia. Bugeaud was major when the rear-guard of III Corps finally withdrew from Spain in 1814.

In Algeria, Bugeaud immediately used flying-columns and provided his men with lighter equipment to curb the native resistance. The same technique formerly used to chase Villacampa in Aragon inspired the capture of Abd el-Lader's *smala* by Henri d'Orléans, Duc d'Aumale [Duke of Aumale] on 16 May 1843.[239] Bugeaud's motto, "*Ense et aratro*" [With sword and plow] became the colonial main theme. It was a clear understanding that the use of violence did not cause the enemy to submit. The economic development of an occupied country and its administration were much more important. Road construction was an essential part of this policy. Developing, maintaining and restoring the axis of communication was the way to support trade, and to ensure an optimal control of the area. Was there any difference with the restoration of the road between Bayonne and Jaca, or the development of the Ebro River by Suchet? Indeed, the similarities with Aragon were obvious. Bugeaud played with the tribal Arabic dissensions and built a native administration to support the pacification. He achieved these results by seducing the *Couloughlis*, the descendents of the Ottoman aristocracy who formerly ruled Algeria. He convinced knowledgeable and respected natives to man the colonial bureaucracy and relay the French policy. At the end of the day, enduring pacification was the outcome of indigenous support. Doing so Bugeaud was in accordance with his predecessors as well as the next generation. The conquest of Africa would be for now on marked by Jean Louis de Lanessan's principle. "In every country there are existing

[239]Abd el-Kader (1808 to 1883) was an Algerian tribal and religious leader who managed to rally Arabic tribes to struggle against the French occupation, during the 19th Century.

frameworks. The great mistake for European people, coming there as a conqueror, is to destroy these frameworks. Bereft of its armature, the country falls into anarchy. One must govern with the mandarin and not against the mandarin."[240]

Even if contexts strongly differ, French junior officers currently face in Afghanistan some challenges whose similarities would have astonished their Napoleonic predecessors. From Spain to Northern Africa, from Madagascar to Indochina, and from Sahara to Algeria, generations gradually refined their grasp of irregular warfare. Through the imperial, colonial, and decolonization period, all of them contributed to build the French modern school of counterinsurgency. Past history draws lessons that provide insight to understand the mechanisms of change and adaptation. These lessons can help us to prepare our armed forces for future engagements. Nobody knows what the nature of the next war is, but insurgencies are likely to constitute a persistent threat in the next decades.

Aragon and Andalusia remind us that a modern army can be effective in counterinsurgency in the short-term, if it respects three major principles. Restraint, legitimacy and perseverance must tie in every lines of effort. Operational culture must set the conditions to get ~~th~~e unconditional support of the population."[241] Last but not least,

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[240]Jean-Louis de Lanessan cited in André Maurois, *Lyautey* (Paris, France: Lavauzelle, 1931), 44. Jean-Marie Antoine Louis de Lanessan (1843 to 1919) was a French politician who was appointed governor of Indochina in 1891. He had a great influence on Lyautey and the second generation of colonial officers. He published many books about colonization and theorized its main principles.

[241]David Galula, *Counterinsurgency Warfare, Theory and Practice* (Westport, PA: Praeger, 1964), 8.

prewar training must generate a consistent corps of junior-officers who master the operational art and fully exploit any initiative under decentralized command.

GLOSSARY

Afrancesado (Spanish). Term used to qualify Spanish partisans of the French Enlightenment ideas, and who were supporters of the French occupation of Spain.

Africain (French). Term used to denote the generation of colonial French officers who conducted the conquest of Africa.

Assemblée Nationale (French). French House of Representatives.

Cabecilla (Spanish). Spanish insurgent leader.

Cruzada (Spanish). Armed militia supported and financed by the Catholic church in Spain.

Desamortización (Spanish). Financial reform conducted by the Spanish Bourbon monarchy, and relying on the confiscation of the church‘s properties.

Franc (French). French unit of currency under the First Empire.

Grande Armée (French). Term used to qualify the French army under the First Empire.

Hidalgo (Spanish). Traditional title of the Spanish lower nobility.

Partida (Spanish). Insurgent network.

Reales (Spanish). Unit of currency in Spain during the Peninsular War. It was replaced in 1864 by the Spanish *Escudo*.

Smala (Arabic). Encampment of Northern African tribal leaders.

APPENDIX A

MAPS

Figure 1. Napoleonic Europe in 1812
Source: Steven Englund, *Napoléon* (Paris, France: Editions de Fallois, 2004), 12.

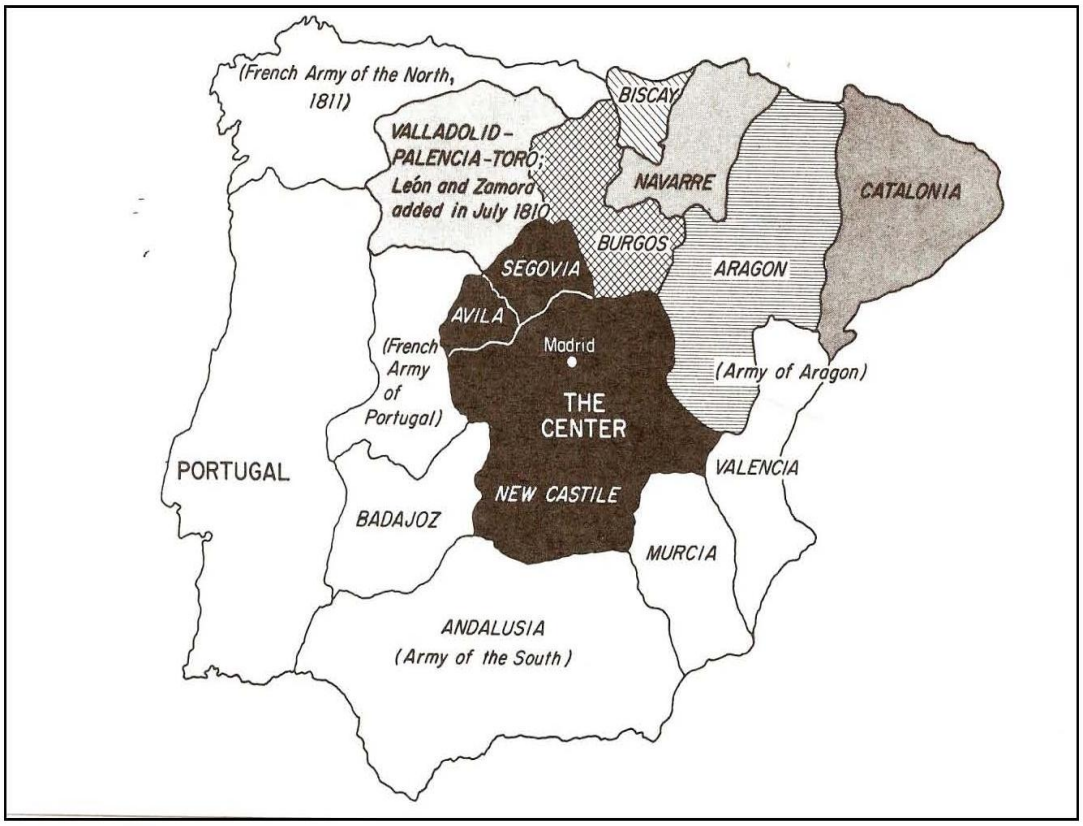

Figure 2. Spain in 1810, the Establishment of Military Governments
Source: Owen Connelly, *Napoleon's Satellite Kingdoms: Managing Conquered Peoples* (Malabar, FA: Robert E. Krieger Publishing Company, 1990), 252.

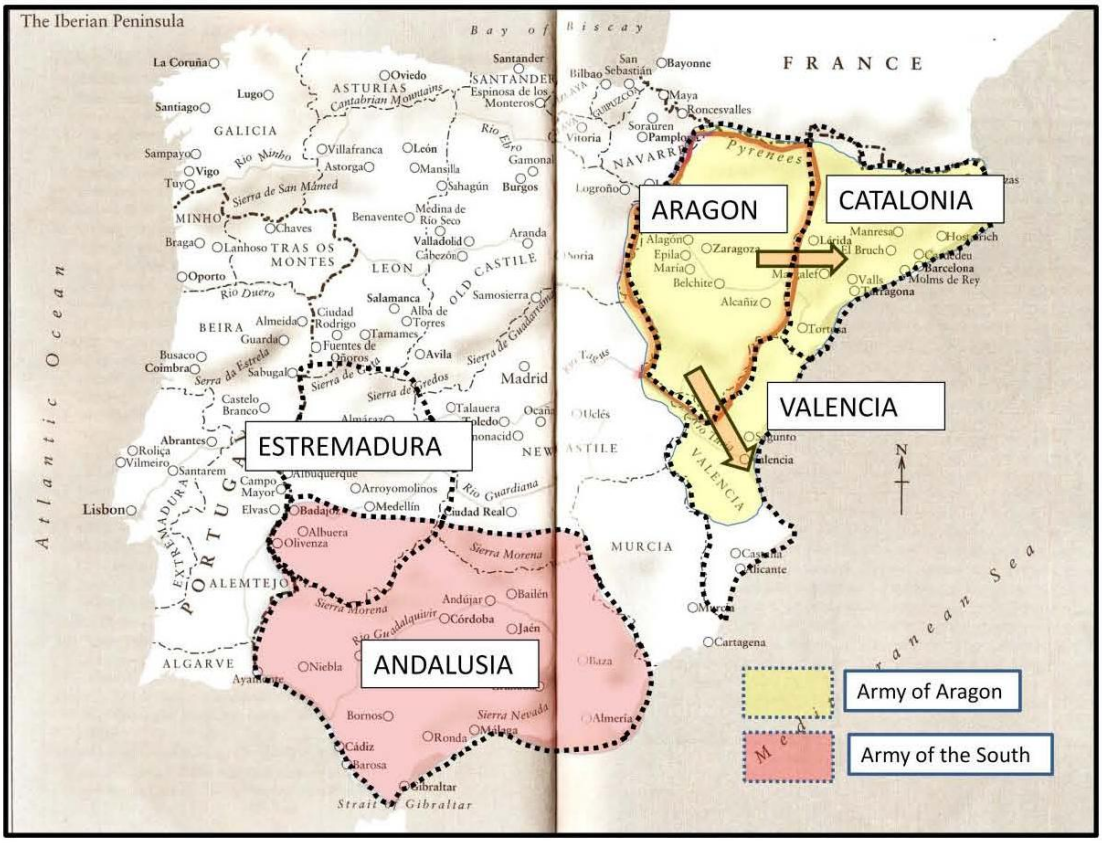

Figure 3. The Army of Aragon and the Army of South fully Deployed in 1811
Source: Charles Esdaile, *The Peninsular War* (New York, NY: Penguin Books, 2003), xvi-xvii. Overlay created by author.

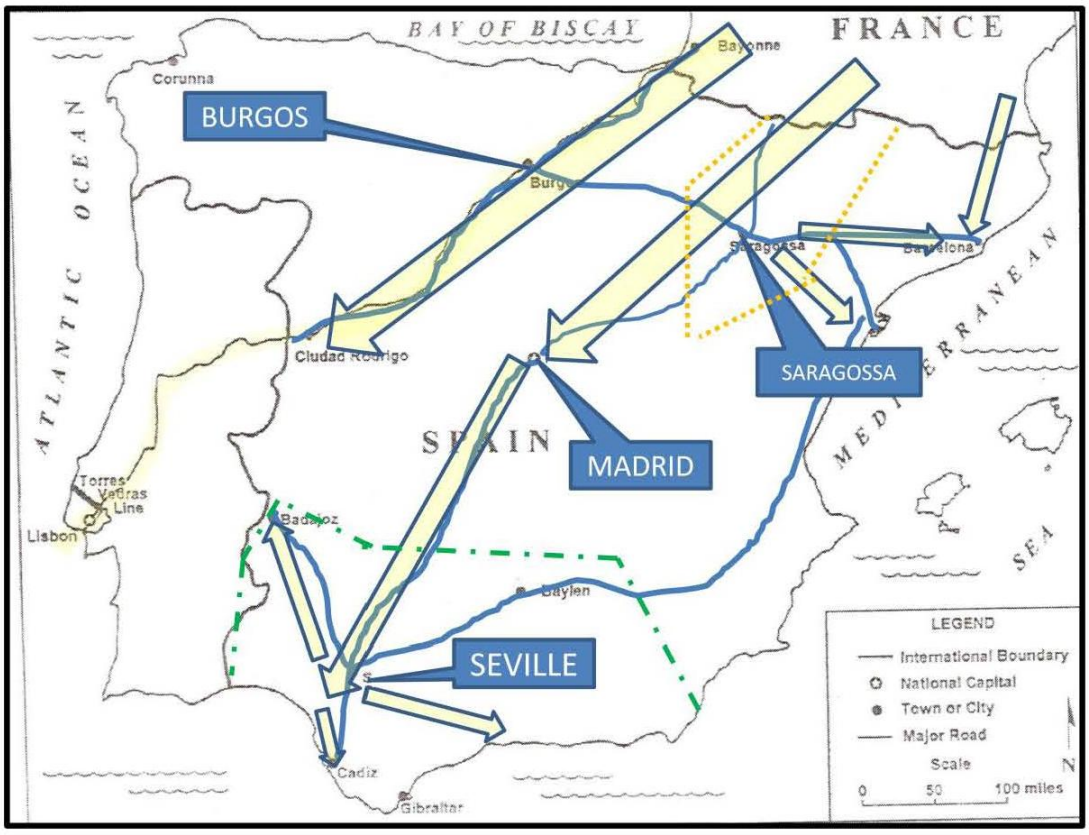

Figure 4. The French Ground Lines of Communication in Spain, 1812
Source: Thomas T. Huber, *Napoleon in Spain and Naples: Fortified Compound Warfare* (Fort Leavenworth, KS: Command and General Staff College Press, 2002), 95. Overlay created by author.

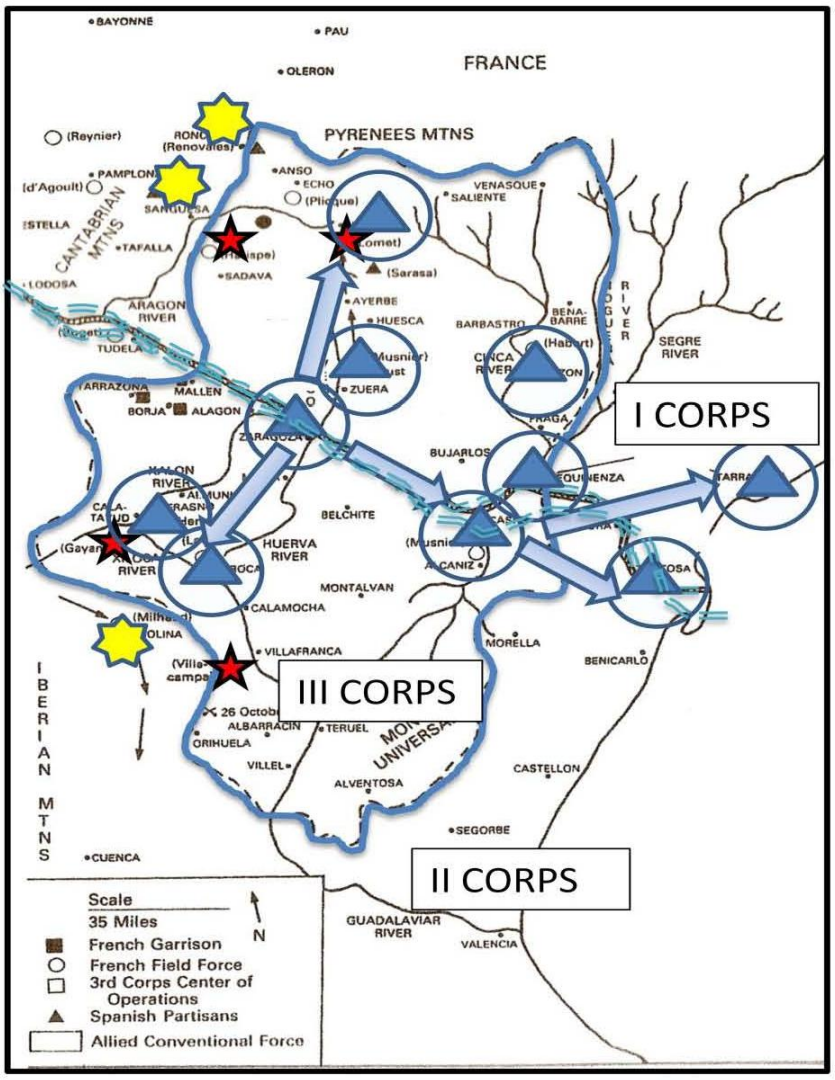

Figure 5. Suchet's Oil-Spot Strategy in Aragon (1809-to 1811)
Source: Don Alexander, *Rod of Iron* (Wilmington, DE: Scholarly Resources, 1985), 22. Overlay created by author.

APPENDIX B

GUERRILLA WARFARE, THEORETICAL APPROACH

Even if its national dimension made it an inaugural case-study in military history, guerrilla warfare was not born in Spain during the Peninsular War. Throughout the ages, guerilla was even a widespread praxis, which certainly predated regular warfare.

> Irregular forces and guerrilla tactics are mentioned, perhaps for the first time in recorded history, in the Anastas Papyrus of the fifteenth century B.C. Mursilis, the Hittite king, complains in a letter that ~~t~~he irregulars did not dare to attack me in the daylight and preferred to fall on me by night."[242]

In fact, guerrilla warfare was a practice motivated by rational causes. In some cases, it was the only way to fight for some civilizations, whose tribal societies were not able to man large-scale forces. In other cases, it was a way to take advantage of the terrain to neutralize the enemy technological or organizational advance. Eventually, it was a complementary method to conduct the war besides regular armies. During the eighteenth century, this latter method was particularly used and also known as la petite guerre, or small war. Under the circumstances, it was an indispensable tool for the absolutist military system. At that time, European armies were built with the lower classes, and recruits were held together by a harsh discipline and adamant drill. As a result, ~~in~~dividual action was almost impossible with such regular troops."[243]

> It was in Poland and the plains of Hungary that West Europeans (Frenchmen) experienced this new kind of warfare. From 1670 onward, the Hungarians under Count Imre Thököly rebelled against the house of Habsburg. They were aided by

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[242]Walter Laqueur, *Guerrilla warfare: a Historical and Critical Study* (New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction Publishers, 1998), 3.

[243]Johann Ewald, *Treatise on Partisan Warfare* (New York, NY: Greenwood Press, 1991), 9.

a French-Polish force . . . under the Marquis de Feuquières, commissioned by Louis XIV.[244]

Eighty years later, the small war would be further refined by the French Marshal Maurice de Saxe. During his campaign in Flanders, he would make extensive use of light skirmish units to harass the Austrian troops. In 1756, French captain Thomas-Auguste Le Roy de Grandmaison would be the first to theorize irregular warfare in a pamphlet.[245] To the experience he accumulated during the Seven Years' war, he also added testimonies of counter-guerrilla operations he conducted in Corsica in 1768. "Guerrilla warfare used deliberately in support of the main battle had already become commonplace by 1750, when twenty percent of the French Army was already organized as light infantry for small war missions."[246]

In fact, as soon as Louis XIV's reign, the small war took another meaning. The war of the *Camisards* in the French Cévennes (1702 to 1710), demonstrated that the guerrilla could take the form of a popular upheaval, driven by political and religious reasons.[247] In 1793, the war in the *Vendée* echoed the *Camisarde* and would be a fresh event in every French officer's minds during the Iberian occupation.

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[244]Ibid., 12.

[245]Thomas Auguste Le Roy de Grandmaison*, La petite guerre ou traité du service des troupes légères en campagne* [The Small War or Treaty for Light Troops in Campaign] (Paris, France: Liébaut, 1756).

[246]Thomas M. Huber, Napoleon in Spain and Naples: Fortified Compound Warfare. In *Compound Warfare: That Fatal Knot* (Fort Leavenworth, USA, US Army Command and General Staff College Press, 2002), 91-112.

[247]Agnès de la Gorce, *Camisards et Dragons du Roi* [Camisards and King's Dragoons] (Paris, France: Albin Michel, 1950).

If an analysis of the ―small war" was conducted prior to the Peninsula War, a posteriori studies enriched the theoretical approach of Spanish guerrilla warfare. Karl Schmitt bridged the gap to explain when irregular warfare emerged as a concept.

> The point of departure for our reflections on the problem of the partisan is the guerrilla war that the Spanish people conducted in the years 1808 to 1813 against the army of a foreign conqueror. In this war, for the first time, a people . . . clashed with a modern army. New spaces for war emerged in the process, and new concepts of warfare were developed along with a new doctrine of war and politics. The partisan fights irregularly. But the distinction between regular and irregular battle depends on the degree of regularity. Only in modern forms of organization--stemming from the wars of the French Revolution--does this distinction find its concrete manifestation and with it also its conception.[248]

Enriching this notional aspect, Karl Marx proposed a chronological approach, structured around the connection between regular and irregular forces. His thesis argued that ―when the disasters of the standing [Spanish] army became general, the body of the people, hardly thinking of the national defeats, exulted in the local successes of their heroes."[249] Indeed, a Spanish General, Marques de La Romana, was the first to support guerrilla warfare. Most of the *cabecillas* (guerrilla leaders) were former officers like Lacy or Villacampa. And a significant part of the vanquished royal army swelled the guerrilleros' ranks. The seminal sociological examination, produced by Horta Rodriguez, outlined that former military leaders prevailed among the *cabecillas.* They produced seventy-four leaders, and represented around twenty three percent of the global insurgent

[248]Karl Schmitt, *The Theory of the Partisan* (East Lansing, MI: Michigan University Press, 2004), 3.

[249]Karl Marx, *Revolutionary Spain* (London: Lawrence and Wishart Ltd. and International Publishers, 1959), Chapter V, 2.

leadership.[250] As a consequence, the distinction between regular and irregular units was not obvious.

Viewed in its true light, the link between the insurgency and the indigenous regular troops was particularly significant as Marx described the evolution of the insurgency. According to him, phase I encompassed a spontaneous rebellion of people in arms, who conducted partisan warfare. The battle of Ocaña (19 November 1809) was a milestone to transition to Phase II when the remainders of the disrupted Spanish armies fueled local guerrillas. This second period was marked by more refined tactics, growing parties and attempts from the Junta to codify the resistance. Finally, the guerrillas reached a critical size in Phase III, and structured themselves in regular bodies. With insights, the Marxist theory phased the Spanish insurgency in a realistic way even if the rationale was biased by a political revolutionary agenda. In fact, a three-fold pattern explained why the Spanish resistance transitioned easily to guerrillas. The collapse of the conventional forces, the fall of the main cities with the symbolic capitulation of Saragossa and the growing contribution of deserters were powerful incentives for irregular warfare.

Last but not the least, the analysis of –fortified compound warfare" performed by Professor Thomas Huber compared and contrasted the dreadful Iberian case with the successful Neapolitan experience. In fact, three main differences complicated the equation to turn the Spanish occupation into an insoluble brain-teaser.

> In Spain, but not in Southern Italy, the resistance to the French enjoyed certain advantages: simultaneous and continuous pressure by conventional and unconventional force, a conventional force that was continuously in being and

[250]Nicolás Horta Rodriguez, –Sociologiá del movimiento guerrillero," *Fuerzas armada espaňolas* (Madrid, Spain: Historia institutional y social, 1986), 270-314.

> indestructible because it had a safe haven [Torres Vedras line of fortification], and a great power ally [Great-Britain].[251]

The belligerents' contemporary perceptions correlated in a complementary way with this theoretical approach. Nevertheless, they considered in a very different way the significance of the guerrillas in the French final defeat.

[251]Huber, *Compound Warfare: that Fatal Knot*, 159-165.

APPENDIX C

III CORPS, ORDER OF BATTLE

NOTE 2, PAGE 10, TOME Ier.

Situation du 3e corps d'armée, au mois de mai 1809.

DIVISIONS.	RÉGIMENTS.	BATAILLONS.	ESCADRONS.	HOMMES.	TOTAL des combattants.	OBSERVATIONS.
1re DIVISION. Général LAVAL.	5e léger	1	.....	490	4,183	Les régiments de la Vistule avaient plusieurs détachements, et le 121e avait deux bataillons en Navarre. La 3e division, c'est-à-dire les 116e et 117e régiments, en totalité, étaient détachés en Castille.
	14e de ligne	2	.....	1,080		
	44e *idem.*	2	.....	1,065		
	1er de la Vistule	2	.....	860		
	3e *idem.*	2	.....	964		
2e DIVISION. Général MAZUCHELLI.	116e de ligne	3	.....	1,637	4,798	
	115e *idem.*	3	.....	1,732		
	1er de la Vistule	2	.....	1,039		
	121e de ligne	1	.....	400		
	64e régiment	1	.....	450	450	
	Voltigeurs du 4e.					
CAVALERIE. Général VALLIN.	4e de hussards	.....	3	326	796	
	13e de cuirassiers	.....	4	390		
	Lanciers polonais	.....	1	80		
	TOTAL	19	8		10,527	

Source: Gabriel Suchet, *Mémoires du Maréchal Suchet, Duc d'Albufera, sur ses campagnes en Espagne depuis 1808 jusqu'en 1814; écrits par lui-même* (Paris, France: Elibron Classics,2005), 333.

APPENDIX D

ILLUSTRATIONS

Joseph-Napoleon Bonaparte, King of Spain
Source: Jean-Joel Brégeon, *Napoléon et la Guerre d'Espagne* [Napoleon and the War of Spain] (Paris, France: Editions Perrin, 2006), 188.

Marshal Louis Gabriel Suchet

Source: Gabriel Suchet, *Mémoires du Maréchal Suchet, Duc d'Albufera, sur ses campagnes en Espagne depuis 1808 jusqu'en 1814; écrits par lui-même* (Paris, France: Elibron Classics,2005), Cover page.

Marshal Jean-de-Dieu Soult
*Source:*Biographicon Image Database, http://www.biographicon.com/images/Nicolas_Jean_de_Dieu_Soult.jpg (accessed 25 March 2011).

French Mounted Soldier, 13th *Regiment de Cuirassiers*
Source: Jean-Louis Reynaud, *Contre-guérilla en Espagne* [Counter-Guerrilla Warfare in Spain] (Paris, France: Economica, 1992), 88.

French Dismounted Cuirassier, 13th *Regiment de Cuirassiers*
Source: Jean-Louis Reynaud, *Contre-guérilla en Espagne* [Counter-Guerrilla Warfare in Spain] (Paris, France: Economica, 1992), 89.

APPENDIX E

SUCHET'S OFFICIAL NOMINATION AS GOVERNOR OF ARAGON

(Lettre du major-général au général Suchet, datée de Rambouillet, le 22 février 1811.*)*

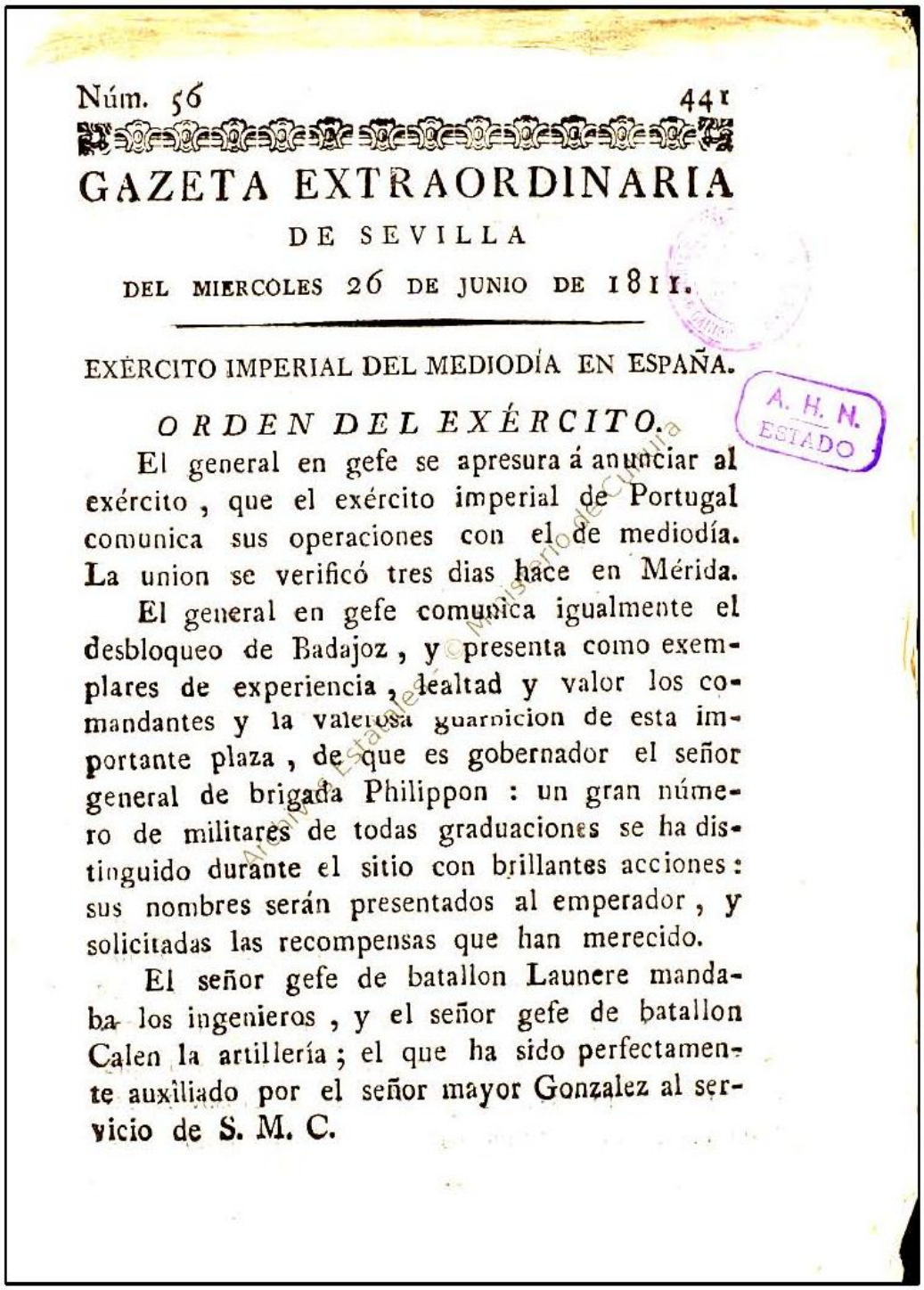
« Je vous ai envoyé des ordres de l'empereur, « M. le général Suchet, d'après lesquels vous êtes « nommé gouverneur de l'Aragon, qui est mis en état « de siége. Cette mise en état de siége vous donne tous « les pouvoirs nécessaires, tant pour le commandement « de la province, que pour son administration; et « ce n'est qu'avec moi directement que vous devez cor- « respondre sur cet objet. Les rapports que vous aviez « à entretenir avec l'état-major général de l'armée d'Es- « pagne, concernent seulement les mouvements de « troupes et les objets purement militaires. Ainsi que « je vous l'ai mandé, toutes les ressources de la pro- « vince doivent être employées pour solder les troupes, « les bien nourrir, les habiller, en prenant au surplus « toutes les précautions convenables, et en ayant soin « que le plus grand ordre et la plus grande économie « soient apportés dans l'administration de la provinee « en état de siége. »

Signé ALEXANDRE.

Source: Gabriel Suchet, *Mémoires du Maréchal Suchet, Duc d'Albufera, sur ses campagnes en Espagne depuis 1808 jusqu'en 1814; écrits par lui-même* (Paris, France: Elibron Classics, 2005), 376.

APPENDIX F

FRENCH PROPAGANDA



Núm. 56 441

GAZETA EXTRAORDINARIA

DE SEVILLA

DEL MIERCOLES 26 DE JUNIO DE 1811.

EXÉRCITO IMPERIAL DEL MEDIODÍA EN ESPAÑA.

ORDEN DEL EXÉRCITO.

El general en gefe se apresura á anunciar al exército, que el exército imperial de Portugal comunica sus operaciones con el de mediodía. La union se verificó tres dias hace en Mérida.

El general en gefe comunica igualmente el desbloqueo de Badajoz, y presenta como exemplares de experiencia, lealtad y valor los comandantes y la valerosa guarnicion de esta importante plaza, de que es gobernador el señor general de brigada Philippon: un gran número de militares de todas graduaciones se ha distinguido durante el sitio con brillantes acciones: sus nombres serán presentados al emperador, y solicitadas las recompensas que han merecido.

El señor gefe de batallon Launere mandaba los ingenieros, y el señor gefe de batallon Calen la artillería; el que ha sido perfectamente auxiliado por el señor mayor Gonzalez al servicio de S. M. C.

Source: Spanish National Archives.

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